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VIEW OF A STREET IN A CORFU

Published by Henry Colburn 13 Great Marlborough Street

THE

JOURNAL

OF A

RESIDENCE IN ALGIERS.

BY

THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"THE PLEASURES OF HOPE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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PREFACE.

MORE than two years have elapsed since these letters were written. During this interval, the Algerine territory has been the scene of several remarkable events, which, though they have not yet solved, are obviously bringing towards a solution, the grand problem, whether France will relinquish or retain the colony. This question, I conceive, carries no very particular interest to the minds of Englishmen as a merely international question, for we have much more important and painful points to settle, than whether France will do

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us good or harm by possessing the harbourless coast of Algiers. But in the course of these letters, it will be found that I have addressed myself to better feelings in the hearts of my countrymen, than petty national jealousy: I have dealt with the subject mainly in as far as it appeals to philanthropy, and regards the general interests of civilization. And England would not be herself if there were not innumerable readers susceptible of interest in such a subject.

I was the first Englishman who visited Algiers after the French conquest with a view to take a deliberate inspection of the changes produced by that event. I went thither, I can hardly venture to say, with feelings unheated by partiality; for, my imagination was filled with pictures of the prospective advantages that might accrue to mankind from

the French thus opening, as it were, the northern gate of civilization into Africa; and preparing the way for commerce and intelligence, to expand over a large space of the globe.

I cannot deny that my first impressions, on arriving at Algiers, considerably damped my enthusiasm. I found, by the confession of their own writers on the subject of Algiers, that they had committed gross errors, to use a softening word, in their conduct towards the natives. Still, however, my wishes for the success of the French in Africa, though damped, were not extinguished. When human conduct is convicted as blameable, I always recal that boldly charitable expression of the philosopher, David Hume, who, in speaking of Charles I., says, "His conduct was brought to the test of rigorous scrutiny: a test which no human conduct will stand."

I offer no apology for those errors in Africa, to which the French themselves plead guilty: except this consideration, that in the drama of human affairs there is no rehearsal that precedes the acting, and there is not always an authoritative prompter behind the stage. In many respects, the French have been unwise with regard to Algiers; but let us put the question to ourselves — have we been overwise on the same subject?—To our honour, Lord Exmouth silenced the batteries of Algiers, and brought the Dey to submission—but to our dishonour, Sir Henry Neale, after that victory, suffered the Dey to insult the English Consul at Algiers, and made a secret convention with the Pirate Chief, that Mr. Macdonald (our Consul) should be dismissed from his consulship.

To return to the question whether the French will retain or relinquish Algiers, I must refer

the reader, who is anxious on that point, to the French themselves. Eighteen months ago, I should have had no hesitation to say, that the French nation, generally speaking, were decidedly in favour of retaining the colony. At present, I can easily see that opinions are going the opposite way; and, if the flow of opinion continues in the same direction, the supposition which I threw out in one of the following letters, namely, that France will retain the colony, will be falsified.

If it serves the interests of humanity that the colony be abandoned, God knows I shall be but too happy at its abandonment. It will save us the pain of hearing of thousands of French soldiers perishing miserably in the Algerine Regency, and of thousands of the natives, who have not a surgeon among them to dress their

wounds, dying by the musket and sabre. But, another question arises,—to whom should France restore this colony, if she were resolved to relinquish it?

On my return by way of Paris from Algiers, I was honoured by the King of the French, with a conversation of twenty minutes, which was principally on the subject of Algiers.—A man like Louis Philippe,—I speak of him as a man and not as a king,—is not to be met with every day; and a trait of his sagacity struck me when speaking of Algiers: he mentioned this grand difficulty as to the relinquishment of the colony,—"To whom can we restore it?" I said to him, "Your Majesty has concentrated into one question, an answer to all the arguments which my mind could ever collect in favour of one side of the subject,

namely, the abandonment of the colony." To whom would the Algerine territory be given back? The Turks,—they would immediately be at war with the Moors for superiority: and both Moors and Turks would join in oppressing the Jews. Then the Arabs would assert their independence, and there would be a universal civil war. Nay, it is a doubt with me whether, in the event of the French relinquishing Algiers, and even blowing up their forts and arsenals, the Algerines would not again rebuild their pirate vessels, and react their cruelties on Christian captives.

The extracts from various works of repute, by writers conversant with Algiers and the neighbouring district, given in the Appendix, are submitted to the reader's attention, as being likely to throw additional light on some of the

topics touched upon in the following pages. But it is proper to add, that the arrangement of the matter thus brought forward is the work of another person, and that I am not to be considered as responsible for the Appendix.

T. C.

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LETTER I.

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Algiers, 19th September, 1834.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ONE day that I was in the King's library at Paris, exploring books on ancient geography, I cast my eyes on a point of

the map* that corresponds with the site of this city. Its recent eventful history rushed full on my thoughts, and seemed to rebuke them for dwelling on the dead more than the living. The question of how widely and how soon this conquest of Algiers may throw open the gates of African civilization,—is it not infinitely more interesting than any musty old debate among classic topographers? To confine our studies to mere antiquities is like reading by candle-light with our shutters closed, after the sun has risen. So I closed the volume I was perusing, and wished myself with all my soul at Algiers. Ah, but the distance —the "*mare sævum et importuosum*" of Africa—the heat that *must* be endured—and the pestilence that *may* be encountered—do not these considerations make the thing impossible? No, not impossible,

* The ancient Roman city Icosium.

I said to myself, on second thoughts; the distance is not so great, and the risk of contagion has been braved by thousands with impunity: I will see this curious place!

I went to my friend M. Galignani, and told him my intention; he introduced me to M. Laurence, who was soon to return to the colony as the Procureur du Roi *.

M. Laurence, with the greatest friendliness, sent me about a dozen books relating to the colony, and offered, if I would accompany him in the mail-post to Toulon, to procure me a passage from thence to Algiers in the government steam-packet. Unfortunately for me, I had too much baggage to be accommodated in the mail, so I had to set out in the diligence, trusting to meet with M. Laurence at Marseilles. As I travelled night and day, I had but a

* Corresponding with our Attorney-General.

hasty view of the country, and when I reached Marseilles, I found that the Procureur du Roi had got there before me, and (as I concluded) was already embarked at Toulon. A merchant-vessel was to sail for Algiers the next morning; I took a berth on board of her, being anxious to get across before the season of the equinoctial gales. I have since learnt that these gales are not so punctual in their visits to the Mediterranean during the autumn as to other seas. Meanwhile, an advice which M. Laurence had given me dwelt in my mind, namely, by all means to take a servant with me from Europe, as the Algerine lodging-houses leave you very much to serve yourself.

The only day therefore which I spent in the most interesting city of Southern France was devoted, not to seeing its curiosities, but to searching for the most valuable of all curiosities—a faithful domestic. A

young man with an honest-looking countenance, who reminded me of your inestimable servant George, brought me a certificate of his character for a twelvemonth past; but farther back the recommender could not speak for him, and there was a mystery over his anterior biography which makes me fear that he was only an outside resemblance of George. I engaged him nevertheless. He said he was a British subject, and a native of Gibraltar; but when I took him to the British Consul his answers were not so satisfactory as to procure a passport. He then recollected that he had been born at Cadiz; the Spanish Consul, however, doubted the accuracy of his memory. Afterwards he discovered that he was a native of Naples, but with no better success. In fine, we went hither and yonder in search of some testimony as to the place of his birth, which appeared to be as doubtful as that of

Homer; only with this difference, that the cities where he alleged he had been born seemed to vie with each other rather in disowning, than in claiming, the honour of his nativity; and nobody would give him a passport. So I was obliged to embark alone—a knight-errant without a squire.

I sailed from Marseilles the 11th instant, and we crossed the Mediterranean in six days. That they were not in all respects the pleasantest days of my life you will easily imagine when I tell you that twelve of us adult passengers, besides an obstreperous child of four years old, were potted alive in a cabin nine feet square. There was no refuge during the day-time on deck, for it seemed to be kept from being set on fire by the sun only by incessant buckets of water. It is true that we could sally from our den in the evening, and in the night-time we had some repose, but it was

constantly interrupted at day-break by the impious brat I have mentioned, beating a toy-drum, and bawling lustily when it was taken from him. At last the very mother who had borne him lost all patience; she threw his plaything into the sea, and threatened to send the little drummer himself after it. Several of us humanely, but in vain, implored her to fulfil her threat. We were fortunate, however, as to our ship's crew, who, from the captain down to the mousse, or cabin-boy, were all assiduously attentive to us. The Mediterranean trading-vessels have generally a bad character for feeding their passengers with tough salt-fish, and lying-to at meal-times, so as to make the rocking of the ship an antidote to their guests partaking freely even of that sorry fare. But here we had excellent food and wine, though the passage-price was very moderate.

One day we had even a fête and plenty

of champagne; it was when a brother skipper came on board and dined with us. He was a strange mad-cap, who, not contented with being master of a ship, imagined himself master of the "Belles Lettres" and philosophy. Nay, he was a poet to boot, and, to my misfortune, learning that I was a *litterateur*, he cruelly inflicted several dozens of his own verses on my naked ears. It was a voyage altogether with many sufferings, but with some consolations. The cool of the evening gave us breath and appetite to sup upon deck, and, in order to promote cheerfulness, it was made a law that we should all sing after supper in turn, *whether we could sing or not*. I never recognised more of the natural gaiety of the French character, and I fell in with it the more easily, inasmuch as that, bating the discomforts I have described, and in the absence of stomachic affliction, I was, as far as the mind is concerned, very tolerably

happy. The prospect of seeing a new quarter of the globe, and of descrying, even afar off, Mount Atlas, with his head in the clouds and his feet in the sands of the desert—this prospect every now and then made my thoughts, I could almost say, delicious; and I blessed my fate that I had not in youth exhausted the enjoyment of travelling.

We passed between the islands of Majorca and Minorca, but at too great a distance to observe distinctly the features of either of their shores.

Early in the morning of the day before yesterday, I awoke to the joyous sound of land having been discovered from the mast-head, and to the sight of land-birds wheeling around our sails. I should think that as far as thirty miles off we saw the whole portion of the Algerine territory, which stretches on the east along Cape Matifou, and on the west along the peninsula of Sidi

Ferruch, where the French first landed in their invasion of the regency. At that distance, and even when you come nearer, by a great many miles, the view of Algiers from the sea is not beautiful. It is true that the tops of the lesser Atlas form a fine background in the south, but the prospect assumes not its full picturesqueness till you come almost within a mile of the shore. Farther off, the city itself looks like a triangular quarry of lime or chalk, on the steep side of a hill, whilst the country-houses that dot the adjacent heights seem like little parcels of the same material lying on fields that are to be manured. On nearer approach, however, the imagined quarry turns out to be a surprising city, and the specks on the adjoining hills to be square and castle-like houses, embosomed in groves and gardens.

No town that I have ever seen possesses, in proportion to its size, so many conti-

guous villas as Algiers; and their brilliance and high position give a magnificent appearance to this suburban portion of the coast. Meanwhile the city itself, when you come in full view of it, has an aspect, if not strictly beautiful, at least impressive from its novelty and uniqueness. Independently, indeed, of its appearance, its very name makes the first sight of Algiers create no ordinary sensations, when one thinks of all the Christian hearts that have throbbed with anguish in approaching this very spot. Blessed be our stars, that we have lived to see the chains of slavery broken here, and even about to be unrivetted on the other side of the Atlantic! But, without these associations, the view of Algiers is interesting from its strangeness to an European eye. It is walled all round in the old style of fortification, its whole mural circuit being, I should think, about a mile and a half. It forms a triangle on

the steep side of a hill, the basis of which is close to the sea, whilst its apex is crowned by the Cassaba, or citadel. That strong place was the palace of the last Dey. His predecessors had dwelt at the foot of the town; but so many of them had died a violent death, that Hussein Pasha thought a higher position would enable him to take better care of his loving subjects and faithful Janissaries; so he removed quietly one night, with all his treasures, to the Cassaba.

Farther off, on a still higher hill, stands the Emperor's Fort—so called from having been built by Charles V.—which commands the whole town. The terraced and square houses which rise, seemingly condensed, close behind one another, are, like the forts and city walls, all washed with lime, and dazzling as snow.

These objects, together with the pier and light-house, the batteries, lined, tier over

tier, with hundreds of enormous cannon on the sea-side rocks, give an imposing aspect to the city that seems to justify its old appellation of "Algiers the warlike." At the same time the mosques and minarets, surmounted by the crescent, remind you that you are now among the Moslems; whilst a palm-tree which is visible, though remotely, seemed to me like a graceful characteristic feather on the brow of an African landscape.

I had soon, however, a less agreeable indication than the palm-tree of having got to a southern latitude. There was no keeping below when one came close to so interesting a scene; and, as the day advanced, the deck became burning hot. The officers of health, as they are called, detained us for two hours in the harbour, gasping and execrating them, before they would visit the ship and permit us to land. I had been recently so sick as to bring up blood. I

now grew feverish, faint, and almost blind. I felt bereft of every faculty except my fancy, and that was ill-naturedly busy in persuading me, falsely, that I was about to die.

When the boat arrived that was to take us ashore, I could not so much as rise to see my luggage put into it. It was then that a fellow-passenger befriended me at my utmost need. This was a smart, intelligent, little man of the name of Biron, whom I had supposed, from his appearance, to be some officer pretty high in the civil service; but he told me that he was returning to his perruquier's shop in Algiers. However, if he was not in the civil service, his humanity calls me to remember him as a most civil and serviceable friend, and I need not say that I associated romance with his *name*. He took charge of my effects, and saw them safely through the Custom-house.

What passed in that hour of landing in Africa—when I fell on my knees on the shore, like Scipio, but from exhaustion and not enthusiasm—is but indistinctly marked in my memory; but I recollect being glad that there were no ladies in the boat, for we passed many young Arabs, obviously grown to manhood, some of whom were fishing in barges, and others swimming about, as naked as they were born. I recollect, also, that the native porters seized on our baggage with as much impudence as if they had been at Calais, and that my languid spirits were much refreshed by the sound of some hearty whacks of his cane which my friend, the perruquier, bestowed on those infidels. Without the aid of his arm I could not have got to the nearest inn. On reaching the hotel, its solid walls seemed to me to rock like the ship which I had quitted. I threw myself on a bed; my predominant sensation was thirst, but

the roof, the floor, and the sides of my apartment were all sheer masonry, and there was neither bell nor other means of summoning a waiter. My faithful Biron, however, soon returned to my relief. He procured for me lodgings and a servant. I slept soundly that night, except when I was shortly, but not unpleasantly, awakened, by the chant of the Mouzeens on the minarets, proclaiming the hour of prayer.

I now write to you from lodgings which I have taken in the house of M. Descousse, a respectable merchant in Algiers, who was formerly a captain in Napoleon's cavalry, and is at present colonel of the national foot-guards of Algiers. The national foot-guards, I understand, amount to between five and six hundred; there is a national horse-guard also, but it reckons only one company. M. Descousse's house formerly belonged to the Aga of the Janissaries; it

may be surpassed by one or two mansions of Algiers in gilded alcoves, sculptured fountains, and other ornaments; but, upon the whole, it is a fair sample of the best Algerine habitations.

From the street you enter into the lowest, or ground-floor, which is dimly lighted by a window over the door. The main apartment here is employed by my landlord as a porter's hall; but in bygone times, the Aga, surrounded by his servants, used to sit in it smoking his pipe and receiving visiters. On one side of this gloomy hall there are vaulted apartments which were formerly used as stables; but, since the Christian conquest of Algiers, they have been converted into wine-cellars. From the ground, you ascend by two flights of white marble stairs into full day-light, and to a court of some thirty feet square, paved with marble. This court, with a gallery passing in front of each side of its qua-

drangle, tier over tier, to the height of three stories, reminds you of our old English inns; only it is more elegant, and the white marble pillars, contrasted with the green and yellow glazed tiles that line the staircases as well as the arches and floor of each gallery, produce a rich effect.

From these galleries, large and handsome folding doors of wood, curiously carved, open into the rooms. The internal aspect of the house, as you look up to it from the court, is upon the whole imposing, and on the terrace of the uppermost story there is a commanding and magnificent view of the city, the sea and its ships, and the distant mountains. To save the eyes from being painfully dazzled, it is, however, necessary to consult this prospect either by moonlight or by mitigated daylight. Here I meet with my fellow-lodgers, in the cool of the evening, among whom is Dr. Revière, physician to the civil hospital,

an intelligent, far-travelled, and accomplished man. He distinguished himself much in Egypt by his skilful treatment of the plague. His lady is a fair daughter of Pennsylvania. In the Turkish time, men were not privileged to walk on these roof-terraces; the women enjoyed them alone, and used to visit each other by climbing ladders up and down to the contiguous houses. Hitherto I have seen no Moorish ladies upon them; but the Jewesses ogle their admirers on the house-tops with a sort of feline familiarity.

Notwithstanding all this showy architecture, the apartments of the Moorish houses are gloomy and comfortless. They have a few loop-holes in the outer wall towards the street, but receive their air and light principally through windows that look inwardly upon the court. These windows, which are latticed either with black or white iron, and without glass, except where

Europeans have put it in, give the mansion a look of what it really was meant to be, when constructed—a family prison, where it was as easy to watch the inmates as in any of our most approved penitentiaries. Niches in the walls, which have generally doors, serve for presses and cupboards. One side of each quadrangular story, in an Algerine house, contains only one long and narrow room, but a show of three apartments is made out by a wall, built half-way up to the right and left of the central room, which faces the door. At the risk of broken bones, you ascend by a ladder to the top of these walls, and there you find a new floor of glazed tiles in either side-room, with a curtain hung from the roof so as to form two *quasi* apartments.

Until the French arrived, a chimney was unknown to the Algerines, except in their kitchens, or, peradventure, in the house of a foreign consul; and it is still difficult to

find lodgings with such a comfort. Yet the climate, they tell me, is very chilly in the rainy months; and a Frenchman who has been in Norway, declares to me that he had suffered less from cold *there* than *here*. The sole objects of Moorish house-building seem to have been to exclude the heat and confine the women.

LETTER II.

Streets of Algiers — Supply of Water from Aqueducts —Sewers constructed by the Romans—Fountains—The Grande Place—Varieties of Character and Costume — Vegetable Treasures — Barbary Figs—The Cactus—Its prickly Leaves—The Camel—The Horse —The Mule—The Ass—The Caged Wild Cat—The Poodle—The tail-less Monkey—Mode of taking them —Moorish Women — Population of Algiers — The Mosques—Description of the Vapour Baths — Coffee-houses and Shops of Algiers — Native Minstrels—Algerine Airs—Beauty of the Opera Women—Description of the Shops—Food of the Natives—The Bazaars —A Cook's-shop — The Algerine Barber—Expense of living at Algiers—French Soldiers victims to Drunkenness—Prices of Provisions.

Algiers, September 29th, 1834.

I HAVE hitherto perambulated only a part of this city, but I understand that it contains one hundred and fifty-three streets, fourteen blind alleys, and five places that can be called courts or squares; of the last

of these, however, only the grand square near the sea is of any extent. Thanks to the demolitions made by the French, it is spacious and commodious. As to the rest of Algiers, it is, with the exception of one or two streets, a labyrinth of the narrowest, gloomiest, and most crooked lanes that were ever inhabited by human beings. In many of them two persons can scarcely walk abreast; and if you encounter an ass laden with wood, it behoves you to pull up cleverly to one side, if you wish to keep your lower venter from being torn up by a protruding faggot. This narrowness of the streets is, no doubt, some protection from the heat, and from the rain also, where the houses join their projecting upper stories into an arcade; but the stagnation of air which it occasions, together with the steaming offal and decayed vegetables that meet you at every corner, make me wonder that Algiers is ever free from putrid fevers. There are,

however, large covered sewers, which rid the city of much of its filth, and might carry it all off, if the streets were properly swept. The city is also well supplied with water. There are four aqueducts, which bring it from the neighbouring heights, and which feed sixty-four public fountains, besides seventy-eight in private houses. The sewers are said to have been constructed by the Romans in a city that pre-occupied the place of Algiers. For their aqueducts the Algerines were indebted, in 1611, to one of the Moors who had been driven out of Spain, and who, having discovered a spring near the Emperor's Fort, about three-quarters of a mile from the city, laid his project for supplying the city with water before the Dey. It was approved of and executed, and the projector was well rewarded. Every fountain has a ladle chained to it for the common use, with some arabesque sculpture on the stones, and an

inscription which, I take it for granted, is a verse of the Koran—probably recommending Adam's wine as a beverage, in preference to stronger liquors. The Mussulmans are fond of quoting texts from their holy book. On an executioner's sword I have seen inscribed, in golden letters, "God is merciful."

I account for my continuing to be interested in this ugly place, only by the novelty of objects which it presents. The diversity of the people and of their costume is not only amusing to the eye, but it stirs up a curiosity in the mind respecting the history of so many races, and the causes of their concourse. The "Grande Place," as I have told you, affords the only tolerable promenade. Here, at the market-time of a morning, you see not only the various people, but the animal and vegetable productions of nature displayed in rich picturesqueness. It has been a perfect treat to

me, for several days, to lounge here before breakfast. How I long for the pencil of a Flemish painter, to delineate to you the human figures of all complexions and dresses!—the turbaned Moor—the Jew, with his sly face, and his spouse Rebecca, with her yard-long head-dress behind her. I could not pass even the Jew boys that blacken shoes, without being struck by the nimbleness of their tongues, and the comic play of their countenances. They all speak French, and seem the happiest creatures on earth; excepting, perhaps, the half-naked negroes, who are always chattering and laughing loudest, in proportion to the scantiness of duds upon their backs. I omit the Europeans, for they rather spoil the picture.

Peculiarly striking is the look of the Kabyles, the aboriginal highlanders of Barbary, who have, all of them, a fierce air, and, many of them, legs and square forms

that would not disgrace the grenadier company of the 42nd. Taller, and generally slenderer, are the Arabs, descended from those who conquered the country in the seventh century. They are distinguishable by vivid black eyes, shaped like an almond laid sidewise; and though many of them look wretched and squalid, you see some among them whose better drapery and forms, and fine Old Testament heads, give them a truly patriarchal appearance. I thought myself looking on a living image of antiquity, as I stood this morning beside a majestic old Arab, whilst he made the camels he had led into the market kneel before him to be unloaded of their enormous cargoes of herbs and fruits. I felt "my very een enriched" at the sight of the vegetable treasures around me, glowing with all the colours of the rainbow—splendid heaps of purple grapes in one pannier, and oranges, peaches, lemons, and pomegra-

nates in another. Here were spread out in piles the huge and golden-hued melons and pompions, and there the white garlic, "and the scarlet and green pepper-pods," together with the brown melogines, an excellent pot-vegetable, in size, shape, and colour resembling a polished cocoa-nut.

Altogether the vegetable profusion here beats even that of Covent Garden; the only exception to its glory is, that their carrots, turnips, and potatoes are smaller and dearer, in proportion to general prices, than with us. I was particularly astonished at the cheapness of Barbary-figs—ten for a sou—in Scotch, a bawbee. It is a fruit entirely distinct from the true fig, and, though sweet, is insipidly flavoured; but still it is palatable and nutritious, especially if the stomach requires a slight astringent. I ceased to be surprised at its cheapness, when I found that it grows wild on the road-side, and may be had

for the trouble of gathering. It is not an universal production over Barbary, but, where it grows, the poorer Arabs live on it almost entirely during the weeks when it is in season. It is about the size of an ordinary lemon, and grows on the cactus-bush.

This plant, the cactus, does not assume the shape of a tree till its leaves, which are about ten inches long, and an inch thick, twist themselves together into a trunk. It affords the singular phenomenon of leaf springing out of leaf. The leaves are thickly covered with prickles, which, when they get into animal flesh, are with difficulty coaxed out of it. It is much used for hedges about Algiers; but, if you should ever come to this country, my dear friend, I exhort you never to let your linen be spread out on the cactus. An affecting story is still told of a Dutch family who had a country-house near this city. In

the house there were five plump, interesting daughters, who, in an evil hour, gave their garments to be washed to an ignorant European laundress. She hung them out to dry on these prickly bushes, and such evils were entailed on the lovely wearers of them, that they could neither sit nor recline with comfort, for a week or two afterwards. There is also a fish-market here; but its smell not being so inviting as that of the vegetables, I took an informant's word for it, that the fishes are the same with those caught on the opposite coast of the Mediterranean.

Besides the general market in the Grande Place, there is a smaller one farther up the town, which is exclusively appropriated to fruit. I have been able to obtain a painted design of the latter; but the absence of the best artist of Algiers has disappointed me in getting what I much desired—a view of a morning market in the Grande Place.

Among the indigenous quadrupeds of this country, the stately camels, of course, are first to command your attention. Their tall slender foals, with their curly fleeces, look as gentle as lambs; but in the grown animal's physiognomy there is an expression of ferocity which is not always absent from his real character. The camel is not that meek animal which report generally leads us to suppose him. I went up to pat one of them, but he showed his teeth with so menacing a cry, that I made a precipitate retreat from him. He is particularly fierce in the rutting season, and is then sometimes dangerous even to his native owner. It is true that the Arab contrives almost always to manage and attach him, though he loads him heavily, and treats him often to hard fare, even now and then to a blow; but, on the whole, the Arab deals kindly with him, and gives him good provender when he can afford it. The

animal, in fact, grows up like a child under the tent of his master, partakes of his plenty as well as his penury—enjoys his song, and understands his biddings. His docility springs from habit and affection —nay, we may almost say from moral feeling; for he rebels when his temper is not sagaciously managed. When the French came to Algiers and got possession of camels, they thought that their obedience might be enforced, like that of mules and asses, by simple beating; but the camels soon showed their conquerors that they were not to be so treated, and that both their kick and their bite were rather formidable.

The horse here may be believed to have degenerated from the old Numidian breed; for he is lanky, and seldom elegantly shaped, and he never shows the blended fire and muscle of a prime English horse. Yet I am told that his hardihood and fleet-

ness are often astonishing, and that his speed in sweeping down declivities would task the horsemanship of an English jockey. It is surprising how safe and serviceable these animals are, though never mutilated. They will certainly give a snap at times, both in joke and earnest, but they are seldom vicious; and I am just come from seeing a "*cheval entier*," a beautiful creature, who will put his fore-foot into your hand for the bribe of a sugar-plum.

The mules are large and powerful. Of the asses there are two kinds—one, of the true old biblical size, that might take Saul upon his back; the other, very diminutive, and most wretchedly treated. In the streets you are never a moment without hearing the cry of "Harri, harri," from a human brute of a driver, who is urging the speed of some of these unfortunate little donkeys, and making them feel his command by goading them with an iron pike on that

part of their hips where a wound has already been made and left open.

I have seen no sale of live cattle in the square, unless you give the name of cattle to a poodle-dog, a raton, a monkey, or a caged wild-cat, which is now and then offered for sale. I was particularly struck yesterday with the beauty of one of the last of these animals. She lay so sleekly and gracefully on her bed of straw, that if she had been tried for killing birds and rabbits, I could not have condemned her. Near her was a long-nosed animal, which the French call a raton, about seventeen inches without the tail, though I believe he has nothing of the rat about him but the name, for his eyes are gentle, and he suffers himself to be caressed. I am told, however, that he is treacherous, and a devil among the poultry.

Still more was I fascinated by a white, sagacious poodle, who whined in my face,

and beseeched me to buy him, in a dog-lingo more persuasive than Ciceronian Latin. He told me all about it, and how cruelly hard it was to be standing the live-long day, tied by a string to the hand of his salesman. I bought him, and took him home; was ever dog in this world so happy? I thought he would have gone mad with joy. The French maid-servant exclaimed, as he ramped up and down, "*Il est fou—il est fou.*" Unhappily for herself, the poor cat of the house encountered him. He seized her by the nape of the neck, but without hurting her, except that her pride was offended, and galloped round the gallery with her, as she uttered hissing and gurgling sounds from her throat, and sprawled with ludicrously unavailing efforts to scratch him. At last he dropped her, and, coming to an open window, showed his contempt of Mahommedan delusion, by howling in exact accordance with the voice

of an old Mouzeen, who was proclaiming the hour of prayers from an opposite mosque.

But the most popular candidate for purchase at Algiers is the small tail-less monkey, about a foot and a half in height. These gentlemen, though the most diminutive of the simious tribes in Barbary, are more formidable when they congregate and get shelter among the woods about Collo and Bougia, than the wildest beasts of the forest. They devastate in a single night whole orchards and corn-fields. They are cunning and regular in their tactics, having leaders, sentinels, and spies. They have a regular discipline, and a system of warfare: at least I have been told so. No traveller is accountable for all that he relates upon hearsay; it is enough if he quotes his authorities, and I can assure you that a highly respectable French drummer gave me his word of honour as to the

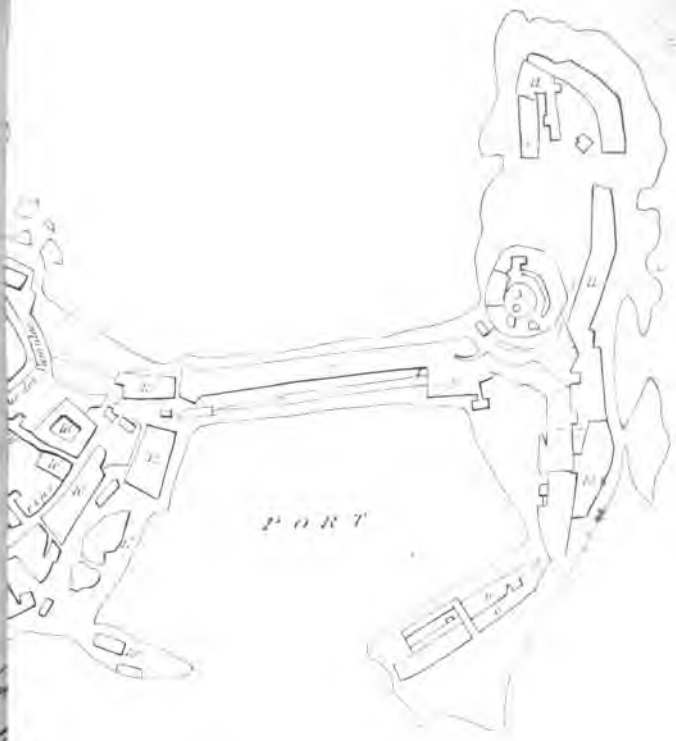
fact, that the monkeys of Bougia are well officered, and that their commander-in-chief has a regular staff. Query, might he not mean a switch? Yet, formidable as they are in their strategics, the natives contrive to make many of them prisoners.

The Kabyle peasant attaches a gourd, well fixed, to a tree; he puts some rice into it, and strews some grains at the aperture to show that there may be more within, making a hole just large enough to admit the paw of the monkey. Unfortunate pug puts in his open paw and grasps his booty, but is unable to draw it back, because it is clenched, and he is not wise enough to think of unclenching it. Hence he remains, as the law phrases it, with "*his person attached,*" and is found next morning, looking, you may suppose, very foolish and penitent. The olden custom was to put him instantly to death, but, as he will now fetch twenty francs at Algiers, he is sen-

tenced only to transportation, so that the monkeys are at least one part of the population who have been benefited by the arrival of the French.

The streets of Algiers, as I have told you, are very dismal; and really, when you meet a Moorish woman, under their gloom, in a drapery much resembling the dress of our dead in England, and looking as much as possible like a mummy or a ghost, she is far from inspiring gallant sensations. Where you have light to see them, the bandiness of their legs is generally observable under their shrouds, and the shrivelled skin around their eyes indicates that there is no great cruelty in their veiling themselves. Still I must own that I have not seen the Moorish ladies so as to judge of them fairly.

The population of the city of Algiers must have been greatly exaggerated by the guesses of travellers in the last century,



Legende

1. Magasins aux vivres.
2. Magasins de la Marine.
3. Logement du Comdt de la Marine.
4. Direction du Port.
5. Tour du Canal.
6. Forges des travaux hydrauliques.
7. Menuiseries id. id.
8. Magasins de l'Intendance.
9. Magasins à la Marine.
10. Ateliers de l'Artillerie.
11. Batteries et Magasins id.
12. Bureau de la Douane.
13. Magasins et Parc du Genie.
14. Bureau de l'Octroi.
15. Caserne de la Marine Infanterie.
16. Idem des Consuls.
17. Fossé d'immersion.
18. Santé.
19. Caserne Mauresou.
20. Fonderie servant de Caserne du train d'Artillerie.
21. Hopital Caratine.
22. Caserne du Parc 23 Idem.
23. Hopital Bab el zoun.
24. Magasines à poudre de la Casbah.

for it is impossible to conceive 80,000 or 100,000 human creatures ever to have been packed together within its walls. The French census in 1833 enumerates the inhabitants thus:—11,850 Moors, 1874 negroes, 5949 Jews, 2185 French (of course not including soldiers), and 1895 other foreigners, making a sum total of 23,753 *.

Algiers has one Catholic church, formerly a mosque, and fourteen Jewish synagogues. The religious houses of the Mussulmans, by far the most imposing of their public buildings, amounted before the arrival of the French to ten large mosques, and fifty maraboots or chapels; several of them, however have been occupied by the French for military convenience, and some of the maraboots demolished. The mosques are almost all alike. At the entry

* This census was taken after the expulsion of the Turks, whose numbers may have probably swelled the population to nearly 30,000.

there is a fountain, with water flowing into a basin, where the Mussulmans perform their ablutions before they prostrate themselves in prayer. Every mosque has an octagonal dome, and a tall minaret, like our steeple, terminating in a crescent, to which a piece of wood is attached whereon to plant a flag, when the mcuzeen ascends to the battlements of the minaret in order to call the faithful to prayer, that his signal may be seen where his voice cannot be heard. Some of the minarets are covered with glazed tiles of different colours, which have a brilliant and not unpleasing effect.

The largest mosque of Algiers stands at the entrance of the street leading from the harbour. It is a long rectangular edifice, divided longitudinally into three naves by two rows of pillars, and, under the dome, at about two-thirds of the length of the building, there are two other rows of pillars, which form a cross with the for-

mer. On each side of the grand nave there are galleries supported on pillars, of which galleries those nearest the door are public, whilst those beyond the dome are appropriated to the gentry. Five or six lustres of cut glass, and several lamps, are suspended with chains along the whole length of the grand nave, as well as along the two rows of pillars which intersect the dome. The lamps are lighted for the evening prayers, but the lustres only on grand occasions, such as the feast of the Bayram. There is a niche for the Imams, and a pulpit, ascended by a flight of stairs, for the preacher. Mats of reed and rich carpets are spread on the pavement.

There are a great many vapour-baths in Algiers. In these establishments, you enter a chamber paved with marble, vaulted, and lighted from above by small glass windows. The steam is created by hot water being poured into basins that stand on the

sides of the room. A Moorish young man, who conducts you hither, is arrayed only in a linen cloth around his middle, and after dismantling you of your customary dress, he affords you a similar covering. After you have been seated for some minutes on a bench, inhaling the vapour and perspiring plentifully, he throws warm water over you,—rubs, or rather scrapes the skin, pats and paws the whole body, except what the cloth covers, as if he were kneading dough, singing all the time an Arabian song, and finally dries you with a towel. In an old account of Algiers by an Englishman, I find that this operation in the baths used to be quite formidable to a stranger—there was such rubbing with pumice-stones, and stretching the joints till they cracked. The treatment now-a-days is sufficiently gentle, but I felt myself less invigorated by it than by the cold or tepid bath.

The coffee-houses and taverns of Algiers

are very amusing, and not the least so when they exhibit European and Moorish manners so much amalgamating, that you find Moors eating with knives and forks, and sitting on chairs instead of squatting on mats and sofas. In the best French coffee-houses I have observed several Moors whom you might recognise at once to be men of the upper class, by their fine white turbans and dresses, as well as by their graceful manners and shapely hands. The Moorish gentlemen, I should say, are not more swarthy than dark-haired Europeans—only that a ruddy complexion is never to be seen. The other evening I took my coffee near two of them, each of whom I was told was supposed to be worth at least 40,000*l.* sterling. I was, at first, Englishman enough to laugh at the idea of men worth 40,000*l.* going about with bare legs; but, recollecting my own Highland origin, I said to myself,—and has not the chieftain of my own

clan, in the best old times, shown as much of his naked limbs? I have seen a Highland clergyman mount the pulpit in a filabeg.

I was struck with the perfectly gentlemanlike air of these Moors. There was grace in every movement of their white and well-formed hands. By the tones of their voice, I knew that they were arguing, but it was with mildness and light pleasantry, and their Arabic sounded like a musical language, in comparison with the guttural harshness of the common speech.

In the strictly native Algerine coffee-houses you find the Moors and Arabs squatting themselves for hours on benches, smoking and sipping black and sugarless coffee, which in taste much resembles worm-powders. There they also play at two games, which, as far as I could observe, are like drafts and chess. They listen meanwhile to the vocal and instrumental

music of their indigenous minstrels — a music which, to an European ear, if I may judge by my own, is unintelligible and execrable. They have a finger guitar, with four strings, a fiddle with only two, and a flageolet, which is their best instrument, though bad is the best. I have seen them also use a drum made of parchment stretched over a jar of burned clay. The jar might indeed be painted as a symbol of their music. Really against an Algerine concert I would *almost* pit the bag-pipes of Lochaber.

A Highland piper gives you at least some idea of lilt or rhythm in his rudest pibrach —something to which you could dance or beat time; but in the Algerine airs I could discern no rhythm.—What, you will say, melody without rhythm! it is impossible, and the fault was in your ears. Well, I own to you the utter difficulty of imagining music without rhythm, and I thought at

first that the fault lay wholly in my own ear; but when I spoke on the subject with a Frenchman here, who is the leader of a regimental band, he told me that the rhythm in Moorish melodies is so capricious as to puzzle him *.

The natives have also a sort of opera-house of their own, where Mooresses dance unveiled — if their monotonous, see-saw movements can be called a dance. Of course the reputed purity of those ladies cannot be compared with the unsunned snow, but, in justice to the *beauty* of the Algerine fair sex, which I have impeached upon suspicion, I ought to say that more than one of these opera-women appeared to me exceedingly handsome.

* At a later period of my residence in Algiers, a most accomplished vocal musician, the lady of Colonel De Verger, had the kindness to write out for me the notes of some Algerine airs; but she said, "I have been obliged to put a rhythm of my own to them, for I never could discern what the natives mean the rhythm to be."

The shops that have been opened by the French are of course after the fashion of Europe; but those of the Moors and Jews are in general formed by a recess in the side of a house, some four feet deep, and seven feet long, and raised a step above the ground. In these booths you see the tailor sewing an embroidered garment, the shoemaker shaping slippers of morocco-leather, and a variety of native artisans plying their different trades. In the butchers' shops I observe a luxury (at least we Scotchmen esteem it as such) which I little expected to meet with so far from home, namely, a singed sheep's head. The meat here is but indifferent. The restaurants affect the Paris cuisine; but, whether it be the fault of the cook, the viands, or the climate, I have had little gastronomic pleasure since my arrival.

The general food of the natives is couscousou, a preparation of flour somewhat like

maccaroni, but enriched with a mixture of the yolks of eggs, and stewed with a little portion of animal food. I found it very palatable, though a little too highly peppered. Far different were my sensations when I tasted a bit of their mutton, which they preserve unsalted in suet. I believe they smoke it first; it is horrible stuff.

Before the arrival of the French, an European could not find at Algiers either an inn or an eating-house. The African merchants arriving in the city had, and still have, covered bazaars where their goods are laid, with sleeping-places in the upper stories, forming a rude hostellerie. Near one of these bazaars I remarked also a cook's-shop—a miserable dirty hole, where a Moor was roasting bits of meat about the size of a walnut, spitted on an iron wire, over a charcoal fire before the shop. When they were done, he whipped them cleverly off the spit into the plates of his customers,

who grabbed them with their dirty hands, and seemed to relish them much.

As the Algerines shave their heads, though not their beards, they have barbers among them, and the barbers' shops are here, as they have ever been in a simple state of society, great places of resort for loungers. They are a great deal larger than the shops of other artisans, sometimes fifteen feet deep and proportionably broad, with benches around them for the loungers to seat themselves. On the walls they have daubs of pictures representing naval victories of the Algerines over the Christians, executed, I am sorry to believe, by Christian artists who had been prisoners here. Here the Moslem has his head shaved and his beard stained. The Algerine barber is, as everywhere else, a mighty newsman. In these shops the French spies reported that they had found conspiracies

hatched, and plans laid for insurrection, which probably never existed.

I compute that the expense of living at Algiers is about as dear at present as it is at Paris. The arrival of the French, it may easily be imagined, raised the price of almost everything. That of wheat, and all manner of meat, was quickly trebled, and fowls and ducks soared in the market to a height of cost which they had never before been known to attain. Yet, though the greater part of vivres thus rose, some of them kept stationary. Honey and sugar, for instance, remained the same, the former at eighty and the latter at sixty centimes * for the pound of twenty-seven ounces. Brandy also continued steady, though it has been far from steadying either the heads or health of the French.

In this climate a moderate infusion of

* A centime is the hundredth part of a franc.

brandy in water is not unwholesome, except in a particular state of the body, when internal inflammation is threatened. But the poor common soldier understands not the point of moderation. It is difficult to conceive how he gets money to poison himself with brandy, for his pay leaves him only a sou a day for pocket-money; but so it is, that he gets frequently enough of it to be sent to-day to the hospital, and to-morrow to the grave.

The French have hitherto lost here about three thousand soldiers a year, and one of their physicians tells me that at least a fourth part of them have fallen victims to sheer drunkenness.

During the last three months of the present year, wheat averaged 9 francs 75 cents. for 45 kilograms. The kilogram is about 2 lbs. 4 ounces weight, and 9 francs 75 cents. make, at the exchange of 1*l.* sterling for 24 francs, 8*s.* 7¾*d.* for 100 lbs. of wheat; which

is less than 40*s*. a quarter. Beef averaged at 40 cents. the half kilogram, under 4*d*. a pound; veal was a trifle cheaper, and mutton a trifle dearer. Fowls rated at 1*s*. 1*d*. a piece. Rice at about 17*s*. by the cwt. Potatoes at 4*s*. 4*d*. the cwt. An ass-load of wood at 1*s*. 3*d*., and the same load of charcoal at about 3*s*. 6*d*. Finally, vin ordinaire (it is very ordinary indeed) may be had for about 2*d*. a bottle; but from logwood dye and alum I should think that an equally good beverage might be prepared still cheaper.

LETTER III.

British Consul General, Mr. St. John—Cemetery of the Jews—Aspect of the Country—Wild Flowers—Admiration of female Beauty compared with Flowers—Treasures of Flora—Iachimo—His opinion of his Master—Mr. St. John and his Family—Description of his House and Grounds—Mr. Brown, the American Consul—Price given by the Algerines for the Heads of French Soldiers—Turkish Garrison in Algiers—The last Dey—The Aga of the Janissaries—Effect of Lord Exmouth's Victory on the Algerines — Mr. Macdonell—Concessions of Admiral Sir H. Neale—Degrading Ceremonies required of the British Consul—French Blockade—Greek Captives—French Conquest of Algiers—Anecdote of an Armenian Interpreter—Surrender of the Fort to the French—Two hours allowed for the removal of the Dey's Family—French Prisoners liberated—Account of the Dey's Treasures—Compared to a scene in the Arabian Nights.

I WAS three days at Algiers before I called either on the British Consul General, Mr. St. John, or Mr. Tulin, the Vice-Consul; but I had scarcely left my name at the

consulate, when the latter brought me a friendly message from Mr. St. John, requesting me to visit him as often as I could at his villa, where he resides in summer, and in the meantime to use his town-house for my lodgings. The latter offer I declined for the present, but I agreed to avail myself frequently of his rural hospitality. The first morning that I went out to his country-house was uncommonly mild for an autumnal day in Africa. A fresh sea-breeze tempered the sun's rays, and brought a delightful breath and murmur from the sea. Having sallied out from the gate of Babel-el-Oued, I passed the cemetery of the Jews with its splendid white marble tombs and curious Hebrew epitaphs, as well as the gardens of the late Dey, which, though square and formal, are large and not destitute of beauty.

The road to the Consul's house, which is a short league from town, goes round

those gardens up a steep ascent, where the country presents at first only a sterile appearance; but as you get farther up, the villas increase in number, and the vegetable power of nature increases with the height you attain. The fig-tree, the orange and lemon-tree, the pomegranate, the olive, and the jujubier are either growing wild, or in orchards with little or no cultivation. The cactus, with its massy leaves and fantastic trunk, raises ramparts around the fields and along the road sides, while the agavé, a variety of the aloe, shoots up its branches ten feet high, like the swords of a race of giants. Then, at a certain height, you pass ravines on one side, beneath you, displaying lovely openings into the sea-coast, where the waves are whitening its distant rocks. In coming to one of these, peculiarly beautiful, I could not but recall the lines of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence,"—

" And where this valley winded out below
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard,
to flow."

I left my horse on the road with my servant, and went down to traverse this ravine. With delight I heard the gush of a gurgling runnel, and followed a stream almost worthy of a Scottish glen that was wimpling from rock to rock. A brown little singing bird flitted before me: I could see it only by glimpses, but its note, though short and twittering, was sweet. Is it possible, I thought to myself, that I am in Africa the torrid! The air was balmy; the banks of the rivulet were thick with wild flowers; I knew not the names of most of them, or merely guessed at them from their resemblance to the productions of our gardens and hot-houses; but this uncertainty nowise diminished my interest in the charming strangers. When one meets with a smiling beauty, does it spoil

one's admiration not to know her name? I suspect that it sometimes enhances it. Oh, but you will tell me perhaps, that it is fantastic, to compare a man's homage to woman with his love of a flower. True, if you mean a strict, unfanciful comparison. But allow a little phantasy, for it is an ingredient in all sorts of love. When we admire your sex, and, most of all, when we address you in poetry, do we not compare you to every flower that is most beautiful? Then why should I be shy to confess that my heart has a gallantry for flowers? They make me dream that I am among graceful and gentle females.

This was a day which I should never wish to forget: I could not tread a step or look a yard around me without seeing floral treasures that were exotic to an Englishman. It is true that the ivy, the blackberry, and the daisy pleasantly reminded me that I had not dropped into another

planet; yet, altogether, Nature appeared to me like an old friend with a new face; but it was a brightened face, and she was still "*my goddess.*"

When I returned back to the road, I found my man Iachimo conversing with an Italian compatriot with whom he had met. I had taken out my new valet in not the best possible humour. For a few days that he had been with me, my service had appeared to him a sort of sinecure to his heart's content; but when I told him one evening to be ready to come with me at sunrise next morning to make a country excursion, he showed by his face that he greatly preferred the gentler exercise of brushing my hat at home to that of waddling on a mule's back up the hills. At daybreak he came to me with a musket on his shoulder, a brace of pistols in his belt, and a sword by his side. "My stars!" I exclaimed, "Iachimo, you frighten me.

With another gun you would look as formidable as Robinson Crusoe!"

"Signor Campobello," he said, gravely, "you don't know the country that you have come to. You may hear by their cries at night that there are jackals and hyænas all round Algiers; but what is worse, there are leopards and lions. Yes, a lion was killed not far from hence, and not long ago, who had teeth a foot long, and eyes as big as pompions. I know it for a fact, for I saw his skin with my own eyes." "Signor Iachimo," I replied with equal solemnity, "I have heard the sweet voices of the jackals, and I know they would make a cold collation of us if we were dead; but they will never attack a living person. As to the leopards and lions, I engage not only to kill, but to eat all that we meet with. So lay aside, I pray you, your sabre and fire-arms." He complied with a bad grace. Coming under

the shade of the trees, I overheard him speaking about me in terms that were not flattering to my vanity. "Only think," he said, "of that Englishman with whom I live (he did not deign to call me his master) going down yonder ravine to gather flowers, *like a bambino!*"

When I reached Mr. St. John's house, he and his lady received me with such hospitality, that in twenty minutes I felt as if I had been acquainted with them for as many years. One of their youngest daughters, Mrs. St. John told me, looked out of the window as I alighted at the gate, and exclaimed, "Oh! is this Mr. Campbell?—

"'*I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,*'"

repeating a line from my little poem of "Glenara," which it had been her day's task to get by heart.

In spite of some bad jokes that I may have made about children, I am sure, when

they are endearing, that nobody loves them better. It is true that when I conjure up an idea of purgatory, I always imagine it to resound with the cries of cross brats. Virgil himself feelingly hints at this in describing the entry to Tartarus. But a beautiful child, I have often thought, is the only living thing that could bear to be transferred alive to heaven. If Nature had made me a painter, I certainly think that I should have devoted myself to the portraiture of children; and here I found perfect samples of beauty, that should have been my favourite studies, in a sixfold gradation from three years old upwards. Oh! I wish you could see the little St. Johns; they are little saints indeed.

Mr. St. John's house stands high on a hill-side, to the west of Algiers. It is an old Moorish mansion of the most elegant kind, which the Consul has improved by a large additional drawing-room, vaulted and

pillared in the true Mauresque style. From a high hill, to the west of Algiers, it commands a wide view over the plain of Matidjah to the range of Mount Atlas. The garden and shrubbery teem with every fruit and blossom which a rich soil under a powerful sun can be brought to produce. There I saw in flower, on the open ground, the yucca gloriosa, with its gigantic pyramid of white bells; the bignonia rosa sinensis, double and single; with double oleanders, geraniums, and passion-flowers in abundance. For fruit-trees, there are the almond, the guava annona, or soursop, the banana, and others, too many to enumerate.

The only guest in the house besides myself was Mr. Brown, the American Consul, who, as he had been here during the French invasion, had been an eye-witness to all the fighting around Algiers, and, like Mr. St. John, could relate many interesting details. Mr. Brown was near enough

to the scene of one of their battles to see a close conflict between bayonets and yatagans, and could descry a Kabyle, who had mastered a French soldier, cut off his head and bring it away with him under his arm. At first, the regular price of one hundred dollars was given for every such trophy brought in to the Moorish Government; but a Kabyle warrior having been detected in bringing in a native instead of a French head, he lost his own for the attempted imposition, and the capitation prize-money was discontinued, though not before twenty thousand dollars had been given for prisoners, dead or alive.

I slept at the Consul's country-house, and had a long conversation with him next morning. Mr. St. John told me that, before the invasion, the Turkish garrison in Algiers itself consisted of about five thousand Levantine Turks, all of them of the worst description; and who, having small

pay, for the most part exercised different trades. Out of these it was the law that the Dey and his principal officers were to be chosen; so that an enlightened Government could not reasonably be expected. The last Dey had been a waiter in a coffee-house. It is but justice to say that, when he changed the napkin for the sceptre, he was, for a Dey of Algiers, one of the most clement princes that ever reigned.

The Aga of the Janissaries, who married the Dey's daughter, had been a wrestler; and it was thought, if the French had not come, that he might have one day tripped up the heels of his father-in-law. The Minister of Marine, or Lord High Admiral, was, before his installation in office, a burner of charcoal, and his Excellency's manners continued to savour so much of the coal-burner, that none of the European Consuls could speak to him without a trial of temper.

It is strange, in looking back on public events, to find how little the Algerines were humbled by Lord Exmouth's victory, in comparison with the humiliation that ought to have been taught them, if England had followed up her victory with consistent spirit. I will not detail to you the insults that were offered to our Consul, Mr. Macdonell, a man of excellent character (Mr. St. John's predecessor), because I am sure that the history of the whole affair must have been published in England. We had a dispute with the Dey of Algiers, as you may remember, in 1823. I am not speaking Mr. St. John's opinion on the subject; for my object was to get facts from him, and not opinions; and he could tell me no fact tending to shake my conviction that Macdonell was an ill-used man, and that our compromise with the African barbarian was a stain on the honour of England. Whether the blame belonged to our Govern-

ment, or to Sir Harry Neale, who commanded the squadron before Algiers, I will not take upon me to say; but so it was, that Admiral Sir H. Neale made two concessions to the Dey—the meaner that they were secret—namely, that our flag should not be hoisted in the English Consulate in Algiers, and that Mr. Macdonell should not return as Consul.

When Mr. St. John succeeded him, all the disgraceful ceremonies in the intercourse between the representative of Great Britain and the chief of the chastised pirates were continued. The British Consul, like that of the other Christian powers, was still obliged, whenever he came in sight of the Dey's palace, to walk bare-headed under the hottest sun. Like all the rest, he was obliged, on reaching the palace, to sit down on a stone bench in an open passage, where every porter could sit down beside him. He was not allowed to wear a

sword in the Dey's presence, nor to ride by the Cassaba, though his own servants, if they were Mahometans, might do so. The Kabyles used to be on horseback, whilst the Christian Consuls went a-foot; nay, even when they passed the ancient palace of the Dey, where nobody had lived for twelve years past, they were obliged to uncover their heads as long as it pleased the Turkish soldiers who were sitting before it. The concessions of Sir Harry Neale exalted the pride of the Algerines; and the Dey, in an altercation with the French Consul, gave him a blow with his fan. For this unwaiter-like conduct he refused to make any reparation; and the singularly inefficient blockade kept up by a squadron which the French sent out to Algiers raised his spirits to mirthful insolence. He had been at Paris, and he used to compare the French blockading ships to the Cyprian girls around the gates of the Parisian play-

houses, who beset all outgoers, but catch not one in a hundred.

Meanwhile the British Consul heard of Greek captives being brought to Algiers and doomed to labour as slaves, but without either pay or the usual sustenance allowed to slaves. He was answered, that those Greeks were subjects of the Porte, and that England had no right to interfere for them. —To this the reply was obvious, that Lord Exmouth had extorted a bond from Algiers, sealed by the blood of a thousand Englishmen, that no Christian should hereafter be made a slave in the Regency. But the British Government relinquished their interference.

About the same time, there was another gross instance of Algerine barbarity, in the case of George Nicholaidi, a rich Greek merchant of Smyrna, who was arrested here, and, for an alleged intrigue with a Moorish woman, of which not a shadow of

proof was produced, was beheaded, and his whole wealth was seized upon by the Dey. If Lord Exmouth's victory had bespoken liberty to Christians of every nation, the paction surely implied their security against lawless forfeiture of life.

I forbear to send you an account of the French conquest of Algiers, because you will find it in many publications. Among the rest there is a pretty accurate description of it in the October number of the "United Service Journal," for 1830. I am trying only to recollect authentic anecdotes that have not been published. The Dey owed his fall to his insolence, ignorance, and misinformation, all working together. When told that the French could equip as many as thirty ships of the line, he exclaimed, "*It is impossible; I know that, except the force they have sent out to blockade me, they have not one ship of the line—I have it from my correspondent in Italy—England alone has ships.*"

He suffered the French to land with little opposition, at Sidi Ferruch, from a firm persuasion that he was getting them like so many fishes into his net. An Armenian, who had served as an interpreter with the French army, was taken prisoner and brought before him; he questioned him about the different forces which the French had brought hither, and when the Armenian told him that he believed the French had brought with them two hundred cannons, his serene highness flew into a violent passion—"Take away that infidel dog," he said, "and cut off his head for telling me a lie." The order was instantly obeyed.

Mr. St. John's family had been removed to Malta in the expectation of the invasion, but the Consul himself remained at his post. The natives respected him so much, that, when they were coming down to cross his grounds, they retired and took a different route at his remonstrance; at the same

time the French general commanding the troops in that quarter put a guard of seven men to protect the Consulate from any straggling party of the French.

At three o'clock of the morning of the 4th of July, 1830, the French, who had already advanced from Sidi Ferruch, had chased the Algerines before them in several engagements, and had posted themselves on the heights which command the town, opened their fire upon the Emperor's Fort. It lasted till one o'clock, when the native troops went out of the fort, setting fire to the powder magazine. At this crisis the Dey sent for the British Consul-General, and requested him to go on his (the Dey's) part to the French Commander in Chief, to know what terms he wanted. The Commander in Chief replied, that he required the town to surrender at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, promising at the same time the security of the Dey's person and

property, as well as that of all the inhabitants of the town.

This answer having been given in writing, it was sent by the Dey to his own secretary, who had gone out with the Consul. On the following morning, the 6th of July, the Dey sent again for Mr. St. John, to know whether he could really depend upon his own safety and that of the inhabitants, as promised by the French general; in which case, he said, he was ready to surrender the town, and sign the convention offered him. Mr. St. John assured him that he might rely on the promise of the Commander in Chief. His Highness then put his seal to the Convention, and requested the Consul to be the bearer of it to the French,—at the same time begging him to get the Commander in Chief to allow him two hours more for the removal of his family to his private house. The Consul complied with the Dey's wishes, and ob-

tained the delay asked for by the Dey. The French troops were detained until one o'clock, at which hour they marched into the town and took possession of all the forts. The Consul, fearing that in the confusion some atrocity might be committed on the French prisoners, obtained their liberation from the Dey before he left his palace, and had them sent to the British Consulate.

The day before Mr. St. John's entrance the treasures had been removed *. He had not a sight of them, but a credible eye-witness described to him the masses of wealth which the place had but yesterday exhibited. The treasury was paved with stone, for no wooden floor could have supported the weight of golden coins, lying

* In the first edition of this Letter in the New Monthly, I find that I committed a mistake in stating that Mr. St. John had seen the Dey's treasury when it was full. He did not visit it till the following day.

literally in millions, heaped up like corn in a granary several feet high against the walls, the plaster of which had been wet when the golden coins were shovelled in, but when dry retained the impression of them, and made the silent walls tell that they had been printed by coins of gold. In this hall of Plutus were contained not only some hundred thousands in gold and jewels, which the Dey took with him, but between two and three millions which the French owned to receiving. Considerable sums, it is known, disappeared unaccountably after the French had got possession of them, but Mr. St. John suspects that millions may have been secreted, though not brought off, by the Dey himself.

No man, certainly, in real life—if we except their owner and those who helped him to hoard them—ever looked around on such sums of solid money as Mr. St. John's informant contemplated. It was like a

scene in a dream, or in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." But did the British Consul, you will ask me, receive any gratuity from the Dey for thus negotiating to save all his personal wealth? No! not a farthing. A pecuniary recompense I have no doubt our Consul's British pride would have refused; but there was something heartless in the Barbarian's sailing off without leaving a keepsake or token of gratitude to one whom he had actually to thank for preserving to him an immense private fortune.

Nay, Mr. St. John had to complain of still worse usage, when, in return for his interference which had saved Algiers from being taken by storm and delivered up to pillage and butchery, he found himself assailed by French scribblers, who misrepresented the whole history of events, and calumniated him as unfair and partial to the Algerines, and as an enemy to the

French. Their calumnies deserve only this general answer, that all respectable Frenchmen here *now* acknowledge the humanity of his conduct, and speak of him in terms of high estimation.

LETTER IV.

The Prison of the Christian Slaves — Once a Catholic Chapel—Treatment of the Slaves—Anecdote on the subject related by an Algerine—Curious Fact in reference to Christian Slaves—Their Food and Dress—Their Sufferings exaggerated—Anecdote of an Innkeeper, a slave—Redress in case of ill-usage—Labourers at the Public Works in the worst condition—Abolition of Christian Slavery—Estimated number of Christian Slaves—Sojourn of an European not particularly enviable—Free Christians formerly well off as to personal security—Anecdote of the Wife of an European Consul—Principal outlets from Algiers—Bab-el-Oued and Babazoun—The latter the scene of hideous Executions—The Garden of Experiment and Naturalization of Plants—Parsimony of the French Government — French efforts at Cultivation around Algiers—Want of Capital—Culture of the Olive and Mulberry—Wealth to be derived from Algerine Wine and Tobacco—Silk and Oil—Capital to be obtained by making Free Ports—France not envied the Possession of Algiers by England—The Palm-tree—Road to Douera and Boufaric—Superb View—Studies for Wilkie—The Dey's Gardens—Dr. Maris—Botanical Studies—The young Dutchman—The Powder-Mill contiguous to the Dey's Palace.

Algiers, October 2nd, 1834.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE just visited a place of gloomy

memory in this city, namely, the Bagnio, or prison in which the Christian slaves used to be shut up after their daily toil. It is a dismal, ruinous-looking old hall, and if the tradition be true that it was once a Catholic chapel, it is probably as old as the first ages of Christianity. It is about fifty feet long, and half as broad, with nothing in its appearance to beguile one's painful reflections on the many deep-drawn sighs of agony that must have been respired in the place during three hundred years of Christian slavery at Algiers. There were formerly several more of the same night-prisons, but this one alone continued to be used for its ancient purpose after Lord Exmouth's victory.

When the French took possession of Algiers, they found here one hundred and twenty-two prisoners. Some of these were soldiers of their own army, who had been taken in the recent fighting, and rescued

by the Turks from the yatagans of the Kabyles and Arabs; others were individuals fortunate enough to have escaped from the massacres that were perpetrated by the wild natives on the crews of two shipwrecked brigs; the rest were some Greeks and Genoese who had been in slavery for two years.

In this bagnio the Christian captives used to be shut up at sunset, and let out again to their labour at sunrise. Ah! what beauty there is in that word sunrise to the imaginations of the free*! To us it recalls the carol of the lark, the freshness of flowers, the sounds of cheerful industry, and

* I find a similar sentiment better expressed, in a poem full of grace and sweetness, which has been lately published, and which I chanced to open for the first time after writing the above sentence:—

"How beautiful is Nature to the blest!
Sunbeams, that seem to mock the sad at heart,—
Flowers, whose bright hues but sadden the oppress'd."
Bride of Siena, s. 14.

all the joyous infancy of the day; but to the captive in this prison—what was the daylight? It only broke the oblivion of his misery, or perhaps the dream in which he fancied himself restored to the land of his birth and love. The sun rose only to glare on him like the fierce eye of his taskmaster, and the black bread for his morning meal was thrown down to him as to a dog! In spite of all these reflections, when I think on this subject, I sometimes try to console myself with arguments for believing that the lot of these victims was not quite so miserable as our imaginations are apt to picture it.

Certain it is, that the ransomed Christians who returned to Europe and became objects of popular interest, both as travellers and as sufferers for religion, were by no means anxious to undercolour the portraiture of their past tribulations, whether

they depended on the alms of the compassionate, or were rich enough

> "Around their fire an evening group to draw,
> And tell of all they felt and all they saw."

And indeed it would have been hard, after suffering so much among the unbelievers, if they had found Christian hearts slow to believe in their most wonderful narratives.

I was talking the other day with an Algerine on this subject, and he expressed to me his conviction that the grossest exaggerations had been propagated in Europe respecting the maltreatment of Christian slaves at Algiers. God forgive me for joking on so grave a subject!—but, in the course of our conversation, a ludicrous instance of Barbary cruelty to a countryman of my own came across my memory, and I upbraided my infidel acquaintance by relating it. Once on a time, amongst the passengers of a ship that was taken by an Algerine corsair, there was a poor diminutive

Scotch tailor, who was condemned to slavery. He was so weak in body that he could not work with the other slaves, but the Dey of Algiers inhumanly obliged him to sit from morning to night upon eggs, like a clucking hen, in order to hatch them. It may be easily imagined that all Scotland laughed at the little martyr when he came home and related this melancholy adventure. The Moor to whom I mentioned it was also much diverted by it, but resuming his gravity, he remarked, "This story is as improbable as it is ludicrous; for, if the man was a tailor, the Dey would have made fifty times more profit out of him by setting him to sew cloth than to hatch eggs."

To be serious: though I abominate the memory of Christian slavery in this place, I am fain to hope that its horrors were somewhat exaggerated. All the religious orders in Europe, particularly in Spain,

were laudably employed in collecting funds for the ransoming of Christians from Barbary. Those pious men soon discovered a truth, well expressed by Horace, namely, that appeals to the sense of sight touch the mind with incomparably more force than mere statements to the ear. So they preached to the eyes of the charitable. When delivered captives arrived in a Spanish city, they were publicly paraded through it, clad in rags which they had never worn before, and loaded with chains a great deal heavier than the Algerines had ever put upon them, but which had a useful weight in the pathetic exhibition.

The circumstance which I am going to tell you carries no evidence at all in favour of the clemency of the Algerines towards their prisoners; but still it is a curious fact, that for a very long period the greater part of the Christian slaves at Algiers were those who had *come voluntarily into slavery*.—Oran,

which Spain possessed till 1792, and Masalquiver, were considered by the Moors as the chief nursery of their Christian slaves; and, in 1785, it was gravely stipulated between the Spaniards and Algerines, that the latter should still receive, as usual, Christian deserters as slaves—whose numbers used annually to amount to a hundred. The garrison troops in the places I have mentioned were generally vagabonds from all nations, though the most of them had been Spanish smugglers or Italian bandits. When those worthies had committed some error that threatened them with death or the cat-o'-nine-tails, they scarcely exchanged their lot for a worse one, when they embraced Algerine slavery. Some of them also had hopes that the Consul of the European nation to which they belonged might interfere to procure their liberty.

The prisoners brought in by the Corsairs were divided into two classes. The first of

these included the captain, the chief officers of the prize, and the passengers with their women and children; all these were put to labour less hard than that of the rest. The children were almost all sent to the palace of the Dey, or to the houses of the first families, and the women were made servants of the Moorish ladies. The second part of the crew were openly sold to the highest bidders.

As to their general treatment, Leweson, a secretary to the Danish Consulate, who published a work about Algiers towards the latter end of the last century, and who seems a candid writer, gives a description which is not very revolting. Speaking from several years of observation, he thinks that, upon the whole, though he admits exceptions, the captives were neither overwrought nor cruelly treated. Their proprietors, he observes, in general had always more or less the prospect of selling them for a ran-

som, and were therefore interested in keeping them alive. Those who were condemned to labour at the public works were the most unfortunate. They were placed by day under the constant inspection of Turks, who were called their *guardians*,—a gentle name for the office of those who guarded against their escape.

From his account I gather that they had three small loaves of coarse bread in the morning, with gruel and old butter or native oil, which is execrably rancid, and then in the evening a repetition of the bread and a few olives. There were many individuals even in this worst-off class who, when they were good workmen, could make a little money by performing services for the natives after sunset, on getting permission from their guardians to let them return to the lock-up house at a later hour, by which means they could obtain a good supper and a cup of wine. The dress

granted them annually by the state consisted of a long shirt, a woollen tunic with long sleeves, and a cloak of the same material. For bedding, they had a woollen coverlet, a pillow and a mattress. No mention is made of their being provided with shoes or stockings.

Slaves that belonged to individual proprietors, whether Turks, Moors, or Jews, (it was not permitted to Christians to have slaves at all, and Jews could have none who professed Mahometanism,) were generally better off than those that were the property of the state. In the city they mostly served as domestics; in the country their agricultural intelligence often raised them to the rank of bailiffs on estates; and there were instances of their becoming such favourites in families as to cause scandal and amputation of heads, on account of intimacy with wives and daughters. The Christian slaves who were taken into the

service of the Dey were also comparatively fortunate. They had little to do, they were well clothed, and sumptuously fed, and when they pleased their owners, it is probable that their *only* sufferings (though, alas! it was a sad *only*) were their longings to return home, and the *ennui* of domestic confinement.

Besides the European Consuls and their families and secretaries, there were some other free Christians, such as merchants, artists, and Catholic as well as Greek spirituals, who were permitted to exist at Algiers. To all this class of persons the proprietors of Christian slaves used to let them out as servants on moderate terms, and on assurance that the hirer would be responsible if the slave escaped. Thus a few of the captives found Christian homes, nor were they required to repair at night to the bagnios, where, according to law, all slaves were to be shut up after daylight.

Some of them after a time left the service of their patrons with money or credit enough to be able to set up taverns, where, by the sale of wine and spirits, they would sometimes make enough to purchase their ransom, and to return to Europe richer than they had left it. But the security exacted from free Christians against the elopement of such *protegés* was severe and dangerous; nay, the patron was even responsible to the proprietor for the value of the slave in case of his death.

So the free Christians, it may be easily imagined, were very cautious as to the objects of their cautionry, and even when they gave it, generally required their fellow-believer to wear a token of his obligation to them. Some free strangers from Christendom having seated themselves one day in a tavern, and called for wine, mine host brought it in to them limping with an iron circle on one of his legs. "What,"

said they, "Boniface, do you keep this house, and are you yet a slave?" "I am so, nominally," he answered; "a Moor is my proprietor, but Mr. so-and-so is my patron, God bless him!—he set me up in this shop, and gives security against my quitting Algiers without notice."—"But does the law oblige you to wear that iron?"—"No," said the arch fellow; "I wear it only to oblige my patron."—"Does he distrust you, then?"—"Oh, dear me, no!—no more than he distrusts his own wife; but just by way of ceremony, he gave his wife a ring to wear on her finger, and in the same way he gave me this iron ring to wear above my ankle." In reality, however, the ankle-ring was not so easily slipped off as a finger one, and its notoriety was some security to the patron. Where is patronage to be found without a badge?

Lastly, as a mitigating circumstance in Christian slavery at Algiers, it is but fair to

mention, that when slaves were ill-treated, they had a right to repair either to the Dey's palace, or to the nearest Maraboot or Mahometan chapel, and there to prefer their complaint. If the case of ill-usage was proved, the proprietor was admonished; if it occurred twice, the slave was taken without compensation from his cruel master and transferred to another proprietor. Here there was at least some seeming recognition of the rights of humanity. But put all the above circumstances together, and place Algerine slavery in its mildest light, it was still an atrocity that reproaches the tardiness of its extinction. The slave's right of appeal to the Dey in case of hard usage must have been for the most part the next thing to mockery.

Those candid travellers who are disposed rather to smooth than to aggravate our horror at the lot of the captives, admit that those who laboured at the public works

were sometimes taxed to extreme toil, and that the numbers shut up every night in the bagnios suffered dreadfully from their hard beds, and the filth and stench of their incarceration. Altogether, whatever may become of the colony, let us thank the French for having at least obliterated the last vestiges of Christian slavery.

The history of that evil, now so happily abolished, may teach us that there is a moral reaction in the universe, which seldom leaves crimes without a progeny of crimes, and that the source of every great act of injustice may generally be traced up to some preceding one. The Roman Catholics were taught persecution by Roman Pagans, and they bequeathed their lessons to the Protestants, who, from Calvin down to the Irish Orangemen, retaliated on Catholics. In like manner Christian slavery at Algiers had its origin in the reflux of revenge and fanaticism from Africa back

to Europe, after the Moors had been driven with horrible cruelty out of Spain. As often as the Moors show you the tomb of Barbarossa, they call him their avenger. Nor should it be forgotten, that most of the southern states of Europe—Spaniards, Sardinians—the subjects of the Pope and the Maltese, till a recent period, condemned to the galleys all the people of Barbary who fell into their hands.

It is difficult to compute what the number of Christian slaves may have been at Algiers in times far gone by; but I am inclined to reckon that they were at least two thousand during the early part of the last century, and in the preceding age there were probably much more. Leweson says that, in 1785, their number amounted to two thousand — though the French had ransomed all natives of France. At the epoch of Lord Exmouth's victory they had been reduced to less than one thousand,

and England lost a gallant mariner for every slave whom she delivered.

The sojourn of a European here, unless he is interested in trade or in the objects of a traveller, is not even *now* particularly enviable; but in former times it must have been dismal. Nay, at this moment I doubt, supposing two enamoured Protestants wished to enter on the state of matrimony, whether they could find a priest of their own church to link the fatal knot and afford religious consolation to the sufferers. I know not how they manage the matter at present, but formerly the Protestants used to apply, in cases of marriages, christenings, and burials, to a Greek priest, who, to their great edification, repeated the service in a language of which they understood not one syllable.

But during the worst times at Algiers the free Christians were well off as to personal security. They had each of them a

Turk for a protector, who accompanied them wherever they chose, and saw that they were neither offended nor injured. And woe to him or her who in word or deed ill used the *protégé* of this Turkish guardian! In the year 1786 the wife of a European consul, who was *enceinte*, was walking in the streets, when a Moorish lady came up to her, touched her on the stomach, and said something insulting to her. For this the Mooress was instantly taken before the Cadi, and sentenced to the bastinado, which she underwent, though both the consul and his wife pleaded for her pardon.

The two principal outlets from Algiers are at the opposite gates of Bab-el-Oued and Babazoun. The outside of the latter used to be the scene of those hideous executions which were not discontinued till very lately, though they had begun to be infrequent. A short way from Babazoun you find a miniature encampment of those

natives who have brought their country productions to town, and who, to save the expense of lodgings, sleep here under miserable tents with their dogs and beasts of burthen. The road, as you turn from this squalid scene, divides itself into two branches. In the lower direction it takes you, after passing a village tolerably well stocked with shops, along the level of the bay that stretches from Algiers to Cape Matifou.

If you pursue this road for a league, it will bring you to an establishment which the French call the Garden of Experiment and Naturalization. I rode out thither one morning with M. Descousse, and the head gardener showed us minutely over the whole Pépinière. The object of the establishment is great and useful; namely, to try among almost all horticultural productions what kinds will best succeed in this country. On a space of eighty acres there are

twenty-five thousand trees, bushes, and plants. All this tells interestingly and honourably for France. The experiment seems magnificent, but, like a French compliment, it is more showy than substantial.

I inquired of the head gardener how many labourers he had in the Pépinière. Twenty he told me. I am no great judge of the subject, but it struck me that twenty pair of hands were too few for eighty acres of nursery-ground and twenty-five thousand trees and plants. "For that matter," he replied, "if I had but twenty active fellows, and they were well paid, I should have no fear; but I have only miserable natives, or Europeans that are the scum of the earth, and even these are ill paid." "And what is your own salary, may I ask?" "*Why, Sir,* 1500 *francs a year, but they are not regularly forthcoming. In short, the whole concern is starved by the French Government; and though it would cost no great matter to get*

abundance of water, I have not more than a third part of what would suffice for irrigation." This the head gardener told me in the hearing of M. Descousse.

I went the same evening to a large party of French people, and expressed my regret very strongly that so noble a project as their Experimental Garden should be starved from false economy. In so doing I neglected an advice that was once given me by a shrewd old Scotchman—" Speak the truth, my boy, as often and as freely as you can, but never for a moment longer than it is agreeable to your hearers." Next day I understood that I had given offence in a high quarter by my remarks, and an eminent functionary desired Mr. St. John to assure me that he (the functionary) was not in the least to blame in the business. I could with sincerity return him my assurance that I had never attributed any blame to him. The fault lies at Paris.

Apropos to horticulture—let me speak of the general efforts at cultivation which the French are making around Algiers. I derive my information chiefly from M. Lacroutz, the principal banker at Algiers, whose fortune, intelligence, and public spirit have prompted him to make large experiments in farming. He has favoured me with a manuscript book of his remarks on the subject. He has cultivated with success the tender sort of grain which the French call tuzelle, which has afforded him, even on ground that was not manured, a return of from eight and three quarters to twelve and a half for the seed that was sown. Hard grain has not succeeded so well, and oats indifferently; but he has sown cotton, and the product has been abundant and of good quality. Some of his experiments in indigo have been also fortunate, and he has a roll of this material as beautiful as ever came from the East.

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On another of his estates, M. Lacroutz has constructed a mill for olive oil, one-third part of which is as excellent as the best that ever came from Provence, whilst the rest, though inferior, was found to be useful and of some value.

From all that I can learn and observe, there seems to me to be no doubt that the intertropical productions, which the Algerine Regency is capable of rearing, might become a source of great wealth to France, and very soon make the colony swarm with a prosperous population, if the difficulty of introducing abundant capital could be overcome. At present, whilst capital with us obtains some four per cent., it varies here, according to the confidence of the lender, from twelve to sixty per cent. This high rate of interest is palpably an obstacle to agricultural, or I should perhaps rather say horticultural, speculation; I mean to the rearing of those products which require pa-

tience and expense. Accordingly it is a fact, and one which I give with deliberate certainty, that out of the whole number of European colonists settled here, between three hundred and four hundred, there are not more than five or six proprietors who are occupied in the culture of the olive and the mulberry—two products about the success and valuableness of which to France, granting capital and industry, there can be no manner of doubt.

As to what might be gained by the culture of indigo, cochineal, senna, cotton, tobacco, wine, and some other articles, a question may be raised, though in my humble mind there is no scepticism as to the immense wealth that might be derived from Algerine wine and tobacco. But still, allowing that point to be debatable, nobody questions that fleet-loads of silk and oil *might* be freighted from Algiers. And what is likely to prevent this eventually?

Why, the scarcity of capital, and the want of a public bank to supply the horticulturist on the security of his land. Almost ninety-nine out of a hundred of the settlers are forced to get an immediate livelihood by rearing grain and vegetables which very poorly repay the expense of cultivation. The most eminent of them, a M. Couput, last year made some 150*l.* sterling by his farm. A few rich men amuse themselves with pretty experiments; but this is all child's work with regard to the chance of France ever repaying by importations the heavy expense of her colony. How is capital then to be got? Why I think it might be obtained simply by making free ports of all the ports of the Regency; English capital, I conceive, would then flow into Algiers, and millions of our money would bring double the interest that it now fetches in England.

I mentioned this opinion to some of the

most influential French officers, both civil and military. The latter class listened to the idea with an air of polite but jealous coolness. "Ah! you Englishmen," they said, "are true patriots, and you can see nothing in the world without wishing England to benefit by it; but what right has England, with so many colonies, to grudge France the fairly-won and exclusive possession of Algiers?" I said, "You mistake me: we do not grudge you Algiers; England would not accept of your colony if you were to offer it to her as a present to-morrow." Still it has been only a few of the more intelligent French officers that I have been able to make converts to this truth,—that England does not envy France the possession of Algiers.

France is at this moment paying nearly a million and a half sterling a year for the right of maintaining twenty-seven thousand soldiers on the coast, who are decimated

every year, and who, with their block-houses, occupy a few miles of territory around Algiers, Oran, and Bona. M. Lacroutz, the banker, treated my suggestion in a different manner from the military men: "It is my firm opinion," he said, "that the wisest thing France could do would be to make the Algerine ports all free."

If you are not already tired with my remarks, please to remember that I was lately speaking of the outlets to the country from the town of Algiers, and conceive me cicerone-ing you in imagination out of the gate of Babazoun. Leaving that gate on the right, you are led by a fine spacious road, cut on the side of the hill by the orders of the Duc de Rovigo, and very creditable to his memory. In ascending, it is pleasant to look back below. There is a palm-tree that, with its feathery foliage, gives an oriental character to the scene.

Whether it is a gentleman or a lady tree I do not know; but whichsoever it is, it is fruitless, because it stands alone, for palm-trees will not fructify unless they grow in couples. They have no notion of single blessedness. Heaven smile on the gallant vegetables!

You see also from this ascent several picturesque Maraboot chapels, and the guide pointed out to me a spot which he said was the tomb of Barbarossa.

At the top of this hill you get to the great road that goes towards Douera and Boufaric. From this eminence the view is superb —the bay with its mighty blue semicircle, fringed with creamy foam—the white country-houses with their orange-gardens—the maraboots, interspersed with here and there a palm-tree—the plain below, where the vapours of the river Arach, as it discharges itself at Cape Matifou, are seen sporting in the sun, and the noble mountains towering

behind the Metidjah. All these objects, when I looked around me, filled me with but vain regrets that I had not beside me some capital artist to note the scene.

The French sent hither the younger Verney; but he is long returned; and I have never been able to get a sight of his Algerine sketches. But England is exuberant in painters; and why are none of them here? What studies would not Wilkie find among the Arabs and Kabyles—the laughing negroes and the merry Jew-boys of the market-place! What scope on these seashores for the grace of Callcott! and what mountain lights and shades for the sublimity of Turner! The altitude of those mountains I find differently estimated. I love them too well to quarrel about a few hundred toises as to their stature; but the highest of them seem to me to be twice the height of Ben Nevis. They have an aspect peculiarly bold. Stretching in a long sweep,

with visibly deep indentations and ravines —with cliffs that are purpled, and masses of precipices that are bronzed by the sun; they strike the fancy—if one may compare mountains to men — as soldier-featured beings, that bid defiance to invasion. And full sure, amidst those passes, the Kabyles have often taught both the Turks and French, that Freedom is a mountain-nymph.

But the ascent to this landscape is too fatiguing for a pedestrian excursion, and at noon it is apt to be too sunny for a ride. You should go out thither on horseback, when the crier from the minaret is chanting to matin prayers, and when the cannon in the harbour announces day-break — whilst the jackal and hyena are skulking home through the dewy nopals—and whilst the daylight is blushing in Heaven like the life-blood returning to a lovely countenance.

The only foot promenade you can well enjoy at Algiers is on the outside of the gate Bab-el-Oued. The most interesting place to which this outlet takes you after you pass the fort of twenty-four hours (so called, because it is said to have been built within that time), and the burial-grounds, is the place still called the Dey's Gardens. These contain many buildings, marble-paved courts, and magnificent fountains. The edifices, by the side of which the French have constructed numerous wooden barracks, have been converted into a military hospital, whilst the garden-grounds are laid out as an experimental nursery for rearing the chief botanical productions which the French are ambitious of cultivating in Africa. This Bab-el-Oued Pépinière, however, is on a much smaller scale than the one to which you go out by Babazoun : it contains only a few acres.

Here I have made acquaintance with the

worthy and accomplished Dr. Maris, the head physician of the hospital, who allows me to come down every morning with a napkin full of wild flowers, the botanical names of every one of which he writes for me on a slip of paper, besides teaching me how to preserve the flowers. Domesticated with him, and equally hospitable, I find two twin brothers, who are the head botanists of the now existing establishment. Their likeness in form and face makes them perfectly undistinguishable, even when they are together; and they speak and laugh so similarly, that if you were to shut your eyes in overhearing their conversation, you would swear that it was a man speaking to himself. Their studies and progress in life have been the same, they took their medical degree on the same day, they received the ribbon of the legion of honour on the same day,—their very souls seem to be twins.

In those Gardens of the Dey you meet with both the cotton-tree and the cotton-bush, the sugar-cane, and the cochineal insect, feeding on that particular species of the Indian cactus which is without prickles. And how are these productions prospering, you will ask me? Why the botanists who tend them tell me they are succeeding admirably, and of the candour of these men I entertain not a doubt; but may not their very devotedness to the culture of these exotics make them over sanguine in their hopes? And supposing that they thrive well in a snug nursery, is that a sure prognostic that they will repay the cost of extensive field-cultivation? On this subject, it would require the practical experience of a tropical farmer to speak with confidence. Commend me, therefore, to the sagacity of a young Dutchman whose acquaintance I have made here. His father has given him several thousand pounds to buy land and

settle as a colonist. The land, he told me, he had bought for a trifle; but that he should not put a spade or a plough into it, till he had been a year and a half on the other side of the Atlantic, and studied there the cultivation of sugar, indigo, &c.: for this purpose he is embarking for America.

Close by the Dey's Gardens and Palace, there are buildings now employed as barracks, which were formerly used as a *Poudrière*. If I understand that French word rightly, it means a powder-mill; a palace and a powder-mill in juxtaposition—is not that a droll alliteration? And yet this was the palace where the Deys used to keep their finest women. Did their highnesses wish to blow up the beautiful creatures in some case of emergency? No, surely, for they exposed themselves to the same peril. And this powder-mill stood so close to the sea, that an enemy's bomb-ship might have thrown a shell into it, without advancing

dangerously close to the neighbouring batteries. The last Dey however had, for many years, discontinued to live in this country-house, having removed up to the Cassaba, from the fear of a blow-up of a different nature among his Janissaries.

LETTER V.

Extent and Population of the Regency of Algiers—Finances—Ancient Boundaries—Vestiges of the Romans—Sewers—Barbary ravaged by the Vandals—Saracen Conquest—The Algerine Moors mostly of Andalusian Origin—Algiers a Pachalic of the Porte—Military Force—The Colouglis—Furniture of a Moorish House—Turkish Aristocracy—Their present condition—Characteristics of the Moors and Arabs—Dress of the Moorish Women—Anecdote—Manners of the Moorish Ladies—No text in the Koran which denies that Females have Souls—A bit of Scandal—Dress of the Children—Use of Henna—St. Cyprian—His remarks on the Employment of it by Females—Moorish Artisans—The Kabyles—Moors frugal and temperate—Their Schools—Early risers—Their domestic habits—Extraordinary coincidence between the death ceremonies of the Algerine Moors and the ancient Irish.

THE population of the city of Algiers, and of all parts of the Regency that are actually occupied by the French, has been pretty well ascertained; but what may be the

number of souls, reckoning a soul for every individual, inhabiting the whole territory, is more a matter of guess than computation. Hamdan, a living Moorish author, whose work on Algiers has been translated into French, begins his book with a bold assertion at the first sentence, that the population amounts to ten millions. This conjecture is rather too gay, as it would imply this savage country to be nearly as thickly peopled as England. Shaler thinks that they scarcely exceed one million, others compute them at two millions, and though I confess that I am only guessing through the guesses of others, I can scarcely suppose the whole population to exceed the latter amount.

Dr. Shaw says, that according to the most exact observations which he could make himself, or receive from others, the length of the kingdom from Twunt on the east, to the river Zaine on the west, may be

a little more or less than four hundred and eighty miles: but here Dr. Shaw certainly means length as you would measure it on the globe, without including the undulations of the coast; for all the ship-masters with whom I have spoken describe the voyage between Bona and Oran as between five hundred and six hundred miles in length.

The breadth of the kingdom is very unequal: in one part it exhibits only forty miles between the Mediterranean on the north, and the Zahara or Desert on the south; but to the eastward of Algiers it is very considerable, and Dr. Shaw thinks that at a medium the extent of what the Arabs call *Tellie*, a word that means the land proper for tillage, may be called sixty miles. Now, if we multiply say five hundred miles for length by sixty for breadth, the result will be thirty thousand square miles: the allowance of one hundred heads

to a mile would make out the population to be three millions; but for a people half migratory this allowance is too large, and the whole Regency does not probably contain much above half that number.

But did the Deys of Algiers, you will ask, keep no registers of the subjects who paid them taxes, and cannot some census of Algerine population be inferentially computed from extant documents? Why, unfortunately, the French destroyed so many archives at the occupation of the Cassaba, as to leave themselves ignorant of much that it would now be their interest to know respecting the former finances of Algiers; but one Turkish document has been preserved by M. Genty de Bussy, which exhibits the imposts paid to the Dey by the various Arab tribes. From this register, it appears that the sums brought in by the tributary natives amounted in French money to a trifle more than 892,000 francs,

less than 40,000*l.* sterling. To estimate the population of the Algerine regency by this document is, however, impossible: before we can infer the population from their taxes, we must know the average value of money in the country; at what rate the natives were charged per head, and whether the imposts here registered were the only taxes exacted from them.

By looking at "Arrowsmith's Comparative Atlas of Ancient and Modern Geography," you will see that the modern regency of Algiers, extending from Oran on the west to Bona on the east, corresponds to a locality in the ancient world which included almost, though not entirely, the whole of Mauretania Cæsariensis, the whole of Mauretania Sitifensis, and the whole of what was strictly Numidia. Observe, that with regard to this identity on the map of the modern Algerine Regency and the above Roman provinces, I speak only longitudinally, or

coastwise; for I believe that from north to south, the Roman dominion extended deeper into Africa than that of the Deys of Algiers ever went. I could inflict on you, if I chose, a great deal of classical speculation as to the ancient state of the country, and discourse lengthily on the names of Jugurtha, Juba, Syphax, &c.; but what would be the good of it if I did so? I should rise no higher in your opinion than Swift's servant-man, who used to show his learning by writing his name with the smoke of a candle on the roof of the kitchen. Let me be brief, then, in my allusions to antiquity. The Romans, after conquering Carthage, took possession of this country. Their vestiges are everywhere to be traced among ruins by the antiquary.

The principal mosque of Algiers exhibits a stone with a Latin inscription on it. This stone had belonged, we may suppose, to a heathen temple in Icosium, and was thrown

in accidentally among the materials for constructing a Mahometan mosque in Algiers. The very sewers under the streets of the city may be believed to be of Roman construction. During the decline of Roman power, Barbary was ravaged by the Vandals, and the white complexion of some of the Kabyles leaves a suspicion that they are of Vandal origin; but Belisarius, in the reign of Justinian, restored Africa to the Eastern empire, though only for a short time; for in 697 the Saracens reduced the whole coast, and Algiers became Mahometan. Centuries elapsed, however, before the place rose to any importance. It was not till the Moors were expelled from Spain, and that twenty thousand of them settled here and in the neighbourhood; hence most of the Algerine Moors are reputed to be of Andalusian origin. The name of Algiers signifies in Arabic an island, owing to the first population of the

town having dwelt on that insular spot which is at present connected to the continental harbour by a strong mole.

After the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, war had long continued between the Christians of Europe and the Mahometans of Africa, when, in the year 1516, a petty king of Algiers, named Eutemi, solicited the aid of the two memorable brothers surnamed Barbarossa, the younger of whom placed his newly-acquired dominions under the protection of the Grand Signior, and received from him a Turkish garrison sufficient to overawe any attempt of his Moorish subjects to regain their liberty. Algiers thus became a Pachalic of the Porte. At first the Sultan appointed the Deys or Pachas of Algiers; by degrees, however, it became the custom for the Turkish garrison, either directly or through their officers, to nominate their chief, at the same time the Grand Signior still reserved

the right of confirming or refusing the election, by sending or withholding the caftan (or mantle) and the sabre of office.

In this manner the Turkish garrison came to form the warlike caste; the aristocracy, or we might rather say, the stratocracy of the Algerines. The Turkish government discouraged marriage among the Janissaries, and their numbers were yearly recruited by levies in the Levant. The sons of Turks who were born in Algiers (they were called, as a class, Colouglis, or Coloris) were not entitled by law to succeed to the Janissary privileges of their fathers—not even the sons of the Dey, for the throne was elective, and not hereditary. This was the general rule, but it had exceptions, and I find instances of Colougli sons inheriting the Beylics of their fathers. Neither was the military force of the country exclusively composed of Turks, for it included squadrons of Moorish cavalry.

Nevertheless, in a general view, the Turk regarded himself here as the lord of the creation. The Colougli was respected only because he was a Turk's son, and his African birth was an implied derogation from his caste.

Those Colouglis or Coloris certainly *now* form no class of society in Algiers that is distinguishable by the superficial eye of a stranger from that of the gentlemen Moors. I have visited one of them, and had from him a polite, I may say hospitable reception; for though it was the time of the Mahometan fast, and he could not partake of the regale that he offered, he pressed me to coffee, sweet cakes, and sweetmeats. His father and uncle were successively Deys of Algiers: I trust, though I dare not vouch for it, that both of them died a natural death. The room in which he received my interpreter and myself struck me as extremely elegant: its furniture,

though rich, was simple; an uncurtained bed, with a crimson coverlet, a bright amber-coloured floor-cloth of cane, low stools and sofas with gilded arms and legs, a clock and mirror of the most beautiful manufacture, and pistols and yatagans chased with gold and silver disposed about the walls.

Having caused it to be explained to my host that this was the first time I had ever been in the house of a Moorish gentleman, and that I hoped he would not think me ill-bred for looking curiously at his furniture, he smiled, and signified that he took my curiosity rather as a compliment; I therefore ventured to lift the coverlet of the bed, and found that its furniture consisted only of wool mattresses and bolsters, without feather-bed or blankets. These two last articles would indeed be insupportable in this climate. The poorer Moors, he told me, have neither mattresses nor pillows, but use some sheep-skins for under-clothes,

and their haicks or bernouses for a covering.

The principal subject of our conversation was a rumour very current here respecting the intentions of the French to give up the colony to the Turks. I do not believe a word of it myself, but I said nothing to him about my incredulity, in order that I might hear his sentiments. He was very discreet, as might be expected, in political conversation with an utter stranger, but through the veil of his reserve I could make out two points of his opinion. The first surprised me, namely, that I saw he gave credit to a report so utterly improbable. The other sentiment which he expressed was natural and reasonable. "If the French give us back to the Turks," he said, "will it not be an unfair transference? But if the country is to be left to itself, who ought to govern it? Surely we, the Moors, who are the great majority, and the most civilized part of its inhabitants."

Of the Turkish aristocracy there is now not a wreck left behind. I have seen a few Turks to be sure, but they are of the lower order. The rich and the landed proprietors have been banished to the number of hundreds. A few miles from town I have visited some of their deserted villas, and their orangeries and gardens, that have been desolated by the soldiery of the Christian civilizers. I sat down during my visit to one of these scenes in a marble kiusk, or summer-house, still shaded by fruit-trees, and looking out to a spot that is yet luxuriant in its ruins.

My companion was a man of the law, grave and dry, though a Frenchman. "What a lesson," I said, "lies here to lawless pride! The Turk in Algiers was but lately distinguished from its other population, not more by his embroidery and the gaudy colours of his dress than by his air of command and his insolence, that

obliged all who met him to step aside in the street until he passed. He entered the gardens of the natives at will, and ate their fruit with impunity; now he is an exile, and possibly dependent on charity." "Yes," said my matter-of-fact friend, "there were many insolent fellows among the Janissaries, and many of them were even drunkards, whose habits were connived at if not carried to scandalous excess. But they were not all of that description: and as to their banishment, it was enforced on the plea of a conspiracy against the French government, the proofs of which were never established; and if there were no clear proofs, their treatment was a breach of Bourmont's convention."

The Colouglis, or Algerine progeny of the Turks, may now be said to be merged in the Moorish population. But how are the Moors to be distinguished from the other inhabitants of Algiers and its regency?

Why, in appearance it is not difficult to discriminate them from the negroes, Jews, Arabs, and Kabyles, not only by their turbans and better dress, but by their form and physiognomy. They have, particularly in comparison with the Jews and Arabs, fairer complexions and rounder features, and they are also generally more corpulent. Their eyes, instead of the mixed fire and darkness of those of the Arab breed, have a quiet and almost indolent expression; and their manners are calm and dignified, whilst the Arabs gesticulate even more than the French. Their costume differs little from that of the Turks, consisting of a turban, a shirt, prodigiously large small-clothes (if it be not an Irishism to say so), a jacket of coloured cloth, which is embroidered more or less, a large white outer mantle, and slippers. Some of them in winter, I am told, wear stockings.

But the Moorish ladies; how can I

describe their apparel, having never seen them but in pictures, with the exception of the two or three dancing women whom I have mentioned, and who, though handsome, would probably give no better an idea of a modest Mooress's dress than a figurante at the Opera would represent our female drawing-room costume? The commoner Moorish women are certainly to be seen, on foot, in the dark streets, veiled and looking like phantoms, as I have told you; but one can neither see them distinctly, nor stop to question them about their toilette. On the country roads you will sometimes meet them; but they are travelling on horseback, caged up in a box, and you can see only "*Box et præterea nihil.*"

Anxious to see a Moorish lady at home, I got a French physician to introduce me into the house of a superior Moor, as an English doctor, with whom he wished to have a consultation on the state of his lady-

patient. Under this pretext, I got actually over the threshold and through the servants' hall, and, with all the doctorial consequence that I could assume, I was mounting the first pair of stairs, when a black fellow, whose laugh and tap on the shoulder thrilled my bosom like a message from John Roe and Richard Doe, showed me his large white teeth, and said, "*Massieu, on ne vous attend pas.*" So back I was obliged to come, and retrace my steps through a long hall, lined with giggling niggers, like General Moreau retreating through the Black Forest.

Next day I received from an English lady at Algiers a welcome and kind present, which I had elicited by expressing my curiosity to see the dress of a Moorish woman in superior life. My fair young countrywoman was so kind as to dress two dolls exactly in the embroidery and vesture of the respectable Mooresses. There is no difference,

except as to the colours of the silk, between the attire of the two figures. The innermost dress is a fine linen shift, bordered at the breast with silk; the hair of the head is bound lengthily behind with a blue silk ribbon; a rich embroidered silk-velvet jacket covers the arms and shoulders down to the waist, having at the elbows a long silk-lace ruffle that reaches to the tips of the fingers, but which, I suppose, is never left long unlifted in order to show the arm and wrist bracelets. From the waist, silk embroidered pantaloons come down, but only to the knee; above this there is an embroidered silk gown, exactly like that of a European lady, from the shoulders to the ankles; but I understand that this last dress *is generally* dispensed with, and that the pretty legs are shown uncovered from the knee to the ankle; morocco slippers, a veil, a shawl, ear-rings, and a necklace, complete the female Moorish costume, which differs little from ours but in the

absence of the stockings, which all our females wear, and of the petticoat over their drawers.

A little circumstance that took place in consequence of my possessing the aforementioned dolls reminds me of an anecdote, respecting himself, that was told me by the late well-known Scotch lawyer, John Clerk. He had a great taste for sculpture, and used to amuse his leisure hours with modelling figures in stucco. His confidential copyist was a dry man, imbued with no sort of taste for the fine arts; and regarding his employer's amusement as a token of unaccountable puerility, he exclaimed to him one day, "Eh, Mister Clerk, I am astonished that a person of your sense can tak up your time wi' makin' stuccy men!" In like manner my squire Iachimo—I should tell you that I had given him notice to quit me, and he was therefore in no friendly mood—seeing the two dressed dolls on my

table, took them up, and with the devil's own sneer on his Punchinello phiz, said something which conveyed to me, that having gathered flowers like a *bambino*, I was now playing with dolls like a *fanciullo*. The ludicrousness of the idea disarmed my indignation at his insolence.

As to the minds and manners of the Moorish ladies, I learn that they are exactly what you might expect from their limited education; that they are slatterns, though gaudy in their dress,—as silly as children in their conversation,—and, what astonished me most, by no means remarkable for their beauty;—that their negresses giggle and gossip with them like equals,—and that the highest subject of their discourse is about sirups and confections. As to their beauty, however, I believe that my informant had by chance only seen some homely Mooresses.

Apropos to those fair ones, it is a common report that Mussulmans believe them

to have no souls. But this is quite untrue. A Moorish Maraboot, or Saint, to whom I put the question, assured me that the Koran inculcates no such doctrine. "Then why," said I, "do you not allow your young women to attend the mosques?" "Because," he replied, "the guardian angel of the mosque might detect in the hearts of the men a human sort of devotion which would desecrate the place." "That danger," I told him, "could be easily obviated by convoking the male and female worshippers at different hours." This remark rather posed him, and all that he had to say was, that it is difficult to change established customs. I believe him, however, as to the fact that there is no text in the Koran which mortalizes female souls.

I fear you will think I am grown a downright gossip when I tell you a bit of scandal that has reached me about the Moorish young ladies. *They are fond of puppies.* For

that matter, you will perhaps reply, that the finest ladies of Europe also frequently show a predilection for that species of animal, both canine and human. Well, but likings take different modes of expressing themselves. A Canadian Indian was once asked if he had known the Bishop of Quebec? "Yes, yes." "And how did you like him?" "Oh! vastly." "But how did you happen to know him?" "Happen to know him! Why, I ate a piece of him!" In like manner my Mauritanian beauties are *devouringly* fond of puppies. *You* only fondle them, but *they* gobble them up by litters in their couscousou. It is said, however, that they do this not so much from a *canivorous* propensity, as from a belief that this sort of flesh is very fattening, and the fat of a Mahometan beauty is her glory.

The children of the Moors are dressed exactly like their parents. The little girls

never go out without their faces veiled. The boys, however, have neither their heads shaved nor do they wear the turban till they are about eleven years old. Earlier than that age they let their hair grow and stain it like the females with the juice of henna, which gives it a red hue, varying, according to the original colour of the locks, from auburn to the hue of carrots. Jewess and Mooress alike stain their hair and nails with this dye *.

This is a very old custom of the country. It is curious to find St. Cyprian, 1500 years ago, inveighing against it in his work "De Habitu Virginum." Speaking to the Mauritanian women, he says, "With bold and sacrilegious insolence you dye your locks. It is a frightful presage of your future destiny, that you already behold your heads in flames. Shame on your

* The Mooresses keep their eye-brows black, but the Jewesses generally stain them red, which has a frightful appearance.

wickedness! you sin with your head, which is the noblest part of the body." In the passage which follows, St. Cyprian appears to have given an exceptionable gloss to the texts of Scripture to which he alludes,—namely, the verses in St. Matthew xvii. and in Mark ix., which describe the transfiguration of our Saviour. All that is said by the Evangelists is, that our Lord's face shone as the sun, and that his raiment was white as light. But the Saint's audiences and readers not having been great critics, he takes the liberty of saying—"We are told in the word of God that our Lord's head was white as wool or as snow; but you execrate whiteness, and detest to wear locks of the colour of his. Do you not fear, I beseech you, being such as you are, that when the day of resurrection comes, your Maker will not recognise you? Are you not afraid when you are coming up in the hope of enjoying his rewards and promises

that he may waive you off and exclude you; and that, chiding you with the power of a censor and a judge, he may say, 'This is not the work of my hand! this is not my image! Who are you? I don't know you.'

"I tell thee, woman," continues the preacher, "that thou hast polluted thy skin with false ointment,—thou hast changed thy hair to an adulterated colour,—thy figure is corrupted,—thy countenance is alienated, and thou shalt not be able to see God when thou hast not the eyes which God gave thee, but which the Devil has painted. Thou hast followed him,—thou hast imitated the red hair and the painted eyes of the serpent;—dressed out by the arch enemy, thou shalt burn in the same flames with him."

There are still a good many rich Moorish families in Algiers; some living on the rents of houses and profits of lands, and others engaged in trade; but, generally speaking, since the cessation of piracy, the

wealth of the Moorish population has been declining. About fifty years ago Leweson describes the Moors as much more bigoted than the Turks against the Christians, the latter of whom, he says, were insolently proud, but not fanatical. National character, however, is gradually changing from circumstances. If an Algerine be now a bigot, he is at least a well-bred one.

I go frequently into the shops of the Moorish artisans, many of whom speak French, or as much *lingua Franca* as enables me to converse with them. They show me their workmanship in embroidery, turnery, &c., with as much urbanity as if they were Christians, and really they seem to me to be ingenious workmen, particularly in embroidery, though, as you may easily suppose, their manufactories exhibit mechanics and art in a much lower state than with ourselves. Sitting one day in the shop of a Moorish artisan, I expressed my

surprise at the beauty of his productions. "Ah!" he said, shaking his head, "your European artisans are fast supplanting us. I had a brother who learned watchmaking in Europe, and once did some business here, but he cannot now get couscousou for his family."

I have been all this time speaking of the Moors as a distinct race from Turk, Jew, Arab, &c. Your curiosity may naturally ask, for what period of time have they been settled in the country, or are they its oldest inhabitants? No: the antiquary tells us that the Kabyles or Berebers are the aborigines, and that the Mauri of antiquity were the descendants of an army of Medes who conquered the country, and partially blended their blood with the primitive people. But as this genealogy of the Moorish race is carried back by chronologists to the days of Hercules, I will not dogmatize with you as to its certainty. The Algerine

Moors, who principally lead a city life, and form the great majority of civic population throughout this regency, I believe to be a race of multifarious origin, sprung from the oldest Africans, the Arabs, the emigrants from Spain, and the Turkish Janissaries, undoubtedly, also, with some mixture of Roman and Vandal blood. Among these different sources I am inclined to suppose the Andalusian immigrants, on their expulsion from Spain, to have been the most numerous progenitors of the present Moors, on account of the vast number whom we know to have arrived in Africa.

On this subject, however, what vast uncertainties must encumber the ablest inquirer! In our own island, how complicated is the question as to the descent of the great mass of us from Celtic or Gothic blood! The half of Scotland was once a Pictish kingdom, but nobody can assure us whether the Picts were Goths or Celts.

Come, let us be off to talk with the living —I am weary of the dead, and their resurrection-men the antiquaries.

The Moors living in the country, I am told, distinguish themselves by their love of genealogy, and by keeping the traditions of their families even since the invasion of the Arabs. The Moors cannot go so far back, being generally sprung, as I have said, from those who were banished out of Spain and Portugal. Ages of despotism must, no doubt, have left some traits of barbarity in the Moorish character; but what right have the French to accuse them, as they universally do, of being fanatic and treacherous? Has a single Frenchman been assassinated by an Algerine Moor since the conquest of the country? and yet the Moors have seen their mosques and their churchyards violated by the French.

The Moors, with scarcely any exception, are frugal and temperate. Their greatest

luxuries are fruit, sherbet, coffee, and tobacco. The quantity of animal food they consume is not a fifth part of that which is eaten by Europeans. Very few of them avail themselves of the right of polygamy. As fathers, they are gentle to their children; and as teachers to their pupils. I have been to see several of their schools. I had found it stated that the Moors actually anticipated us in our Lancasterian system of education. But this is surely not a fact. The very noise that prevails in their little seminaries is more calculated to produce mutual disturbance than instruction. The poor Moorish schoolmaster has generally about twenty scholars, whose education, as far as I could discover, had no further resemblance to that of Lancaster than that the pupils write upon slates or smooth boards. I saw only two that were casting up accounts, the rest were writing and mumbling texts from the Koran. Their

pedagogue has a rod, but he uses it rarely —very, very rarely, I believe—to correct them, but only now and then to give them a tap of warning. The bastinado, though once used in schools, I understand is now grown obsolete.

The Moors are in general extremely cleanly both in their persons and houses. The most of them also are industrious. They all, whether industrious or not, get up at sunrise, and repair either to their business, or if they have none, they kill their time in some coffee-house, smoking, drinking coffee, and I fear sometimes swallowing a little opium. Even the country coffee-houses are much frequented; these have commonly a spring beside them, and some shady trees. The Algerine cafés (I speak of those which are not held by the French) have scarcely any movables beyond straw-mats, on which the guests sit and play at draughts or chess.

The Moors, even of the common class, have a gentle gravity of manner, and I am told by those who have seen the interior of their habitations, poor and rich, that they exhibit a scrupulous cleanliness, rivalling that of the Dutch. In the houses of the rich, breakfast consists of coffee, tea, and well-baked bread, besides sherbet and lemonade. The decoction of a native plant, which is cheap and wholesome, is used by the poor as a substitute for tea. Many burghers of the middle ranks are contented to dine at mid-day on bread and cheese, and fresh or dried fruits, according to the season; though the noon meal of the rich, it is unnecessary to say, is well supplied with savoury couscousou, pillau, garden-stuffs, pastry, and fruits. But among all classes, the evening meal is the most important; and a Moorish artisan tells me that all classes, down to the poorest, contrive to sup on pillau or couscousou, cooked

with a little animal food. How strange is human superstition! A religious Moor will not eat meat that has been killed by a Jew or a Christian. In revenge, the Jews here are equally scrupulous. The Jewess maid-servant of this house refused to eat the relics of my dinner for her supper, because it was meat *not* slaughtered by a Jew.

There is one extraordinary coincidence between the death ceremonies of the Algerine Moors and the ancient Irish. Immediately after the death of a member of the family, all the women in a Moorish house break out into a howling cry, and their neighbours, friends, and relations come to join in the ululation. They have also an Irish way of expostulating with the deceased on the absurdity of his having chosen to die. "Why did you leave us? did we not feed you, and clothe you, and love you?" The defunct, of course, puts

up in silence with their reproaches. He is then given to the sexton, who washes his body, and lays him out in his grave-clothes upon a bier in some chapel, from which he is carried to his burial-place. The funeral ceremony is sometimes accompanied with a choral hymn from the Koran, but I believe the custom is not universal.

In my next, I shall speak to you about the Arabs, Jews, and negroes.

LETTER VI.

Picturesque variety of the population of Algiers—The Jews—The Rabbins—Costume of the Jewish women—Feast of Tabernacles held on the House-tops—The Jews form a considerable portion of the population—Seldom found out of trading-cities—Best Shopkeepers in Algiers—Tradition of their Settlement in the Regency—Oppressed under the Turkish dominion—Frequently burnt alive—Dreadful instance of a Jewish Merchant put to death by fire—Rich Jews had their Turkish protectors for a sum of money.

As the great charm of Algiers to a stranger is the picturesque variety of its population, you must put up with my continuing to describe its diverse races. Of these, the Jews are a race that is surpassed by no other in usefulness and industry. Their appearance and dress are so familiar to us in Europe, that I need not portray them particularly. Most of the richer, and even

some of the middling class dress like Europeans; the poorer men retain their scriptural beards, with a vest and small-clothes like that of the Moors, and a callot in place of a turban. The Rabbins and other persons in authority among their brethren also retain the Israelitish costume. Their women are not veiled like the Mooresses, but surpass them in affectation of finery. A gilt wire cap, slanting back from their heads to the length of at least a yard, gives them the appearance of dragon-flies. The Mooresses, I am told, spare the black beauty of their eye-brows; but the Jewesses stain theirs, like their hair, with henna, to the frightful resemblance of a red cow's tail.

At the end of last week was concluded a great festival of the Jews, which is celebrated here with more joyousness than in Europe. It is a *fête*—so I was told by one of their rabbins—in commemoration of the

passage of their forefathers through the wilderness.

On the flat roofs of their houses they construct temporary arbours with boughs of trees, and there, by candle-light, they sup for seven evenings consecutively, on the best fare they can afford, dressed out, men, women, and children, in all the silks, brocade, and finery that they can muster.

From Mr. Descousse's terrace, that commands a glorious view of the country for fifty miles round, I have looked with pleasure for several evenings on the feasting children of Israel. The lights through the green boughs show every dish that is on their table, and even their dresses and countenances. Their gorgeous apparel often forms a ludicrous contrast with other symptoms of poverty in their circumstances. I observed the other night a youthful Hebrew with a pair of petticoat small-clothes that were remarkable for their "*loov'd and*

window'd raggedness;" yet his jacket was of crimson velvet, trimmed with gold, and his sash of embroidered silk. A woman on the same house-top had not stockings to her feet, but she had a brocaded boddice, and a splendid piece of cloth of gold floating from her head.

The Jews form a considerable part of the population in this capital, as well as at Oran and Bona; but they are seldom found out of trading cities. In Algiers they inhabit the meanest houses, and live so closely packed, that when the plague or infectious fevers break out, they are always the greatest sufferers. I find the French authors who write about Algiers joining with all the world in abusing the Jews. The page of a talented author is now before me, in which he says, " Nature has denied them even the courage to commit bad actions—*La Nature leur a dénié jusqu'au courage des mauvaises actions.*" Now this puts up

my blood. Are the Jews made by Nature differently from ourselves? It is blasphemy against Nature to say so. The same God has made us, and meant us to be brothers of a common family. Shall the oppressor blame the Jew for faults which oppression alone has produced? Let me not forget to tell you that the Jews are the best, because the cheapest, shopkeepers in Algiers; you will get an article always lower at a Jew's shop than elsewhere, and often at half the price. This brings them quick returns, and they exemplify the truth that *honesty is the best policy*. How many Christians practise the converse doctrine—that *policy is the best honesty!*

There may have been Jews in this Regency from the remotest period after their dispersion; but the greater part of their present population are the descendants of those who fled thither after, though not immediately after, the expulsion of the

Moors from Spain. The Spaniards permitted the Hebrews to remain among them when the Mahometans had been exiled. But the Jews soon became obnoxious to Spanish rapacity and persecution: their wealth excited the one, and their religion was a pretext for the other. About the end of the fourteenth century Simon Ben Smia led a colony of the persecuted Hebrews out of Spain. The Spaniards had put him into prison; but he drew with a piece of charcoal a ship upon the wall, and he sent word to all the Israelites in Spain to be ready to embark from a certain port on a certain day.

When the morning of that day arrived, the wall of the prison-house, on which the ship was delineated, opened miraculously, and forth there came a real and enormous ship, a hundred times the dimensions of the one he had drawn, and capable of containing several thousand passengers, which

of its own accord glided down to the harbour. The holy Israelite, with crowds of his people, hastened aboard of her; the sails outspread at Ben Smia's bidding. All manner of accommodation was found in the sacred vessel; cabin-boys brought beef and biscuits to the hungry, and basins to the sea-sick. In a few days they reached Algiers, where they made terms with the Saracenic Government. They obtained a promise of permission to exercise unmolested their religion, their industry, and their commerce, at least under a stipulated taxation. They were allowed even to distil spirits and to brew wine; and spots of ground were allowed them for the erection of synagogues, and for the burial of their dead. This treaty was written on parchment in the year 1390, and is still preserved in the Jewish archives of Algiers; but after the Turks took possession of the country it was little regarded.

Under the Turkish dominion, it is certain that the Jews were most oppressively treated. Their injuries were aggravated by insults. They durst not wear any habiliment but of a darkish colour. When the Dey issued an order that neither Mussulman nor Christian was to walk the streets at night without a lighted lantern, the light was enjoined on the Jews, but it was to be carried without a lantern; and if they could not keep it from being blown out by the shelter of their fingers, it was a nice joke for the police to bastinado or fine poor Moses for going about without a light. A Jew that was struck by a Moor or Turk durst not, but at the peril of his life, lift his hand to defend himself. A person still living in Algiers tells me that he has seen an aged Jew flying through the streets, pursued and pelted with stones by Mussulman boys. The usual capital punishment of the hapless race was, to be burnt

alive. Mr. Schultz, the present Swedish Consul, has described to me a horrible case of this nature, which occurred in his own remembrance. It was the fate of a respectable Jewish merchant whom he knew. He was condemned to the flames for bankruptcy, and as the Dey could not comprehend the difference between a clerk and a partner, his unhappy clerk was sentenced to suffer beside him. The rope that bound the merchant to the stake was consumed by the fire before his torments were ended, and he rushed out among the spectators; but he was brought back and rebound.

If you ask me what is the use of conjuring up the remembrance of such horrors as these, that are almost enough to make us wish our species had never existed, I will answer you by a counter-question. Are the horrors I advert to fiction or truth? Alas! they are too true. They are passed, it is true; but what has happened before

may happen again, unless we appeal to the human heart against such atrocities.

From the fact of the Jews having been so ill used in this country, I inferred that I should find them at Algiers embittered against the late Turkish government, and enthusiastically attached to the French. But the case is otherwise. The Jews of better condition, and it is only among these that I can find persons who can talk French, seem to wince at the mention of their bygone oppression, and to shun the subject as something that hurts their pride. Conversing with one of their richest and most respectable men, I taxed him with this foible, and he laughed, half confessing it. The burning and the pelting of his brethren he could not deny: "But," he said, "we were not so entirely wretched as you seem to imagine. We had an arbitrator, or king, as we still call him, of our own, who settled all differences amongst us.

Commerce and the exchange of money were almost exclusively in our hands before the French came; though, alas, it is not so now. Every rich Jew had his Turkish patron for a reasonable sum, who protected not only *him*, but poorer Jews that were *his protegées*." I pushed him no further in the argument. What he said reminded me that, in the worst circumstances of man, custom and nature always seek and find out *some* means, more or less, to alleviate his misery.

LETTER VII.

Dress of the Kabyles—Differs little from that of the Arabs—Their Food—Their mode of Warfare—Universally profess Mahometanism—The Maraboots—The Bedouins—Dexterity of the Kabyle Tribes in the Manual Arts—Practise most of the handicrafts of Europe—Forgery of five-franc pieces—The Arabs distinguished from the Kabyles by their physiognomy—The Arab women tattooed—Their dress—Anecdote of a French Soldier—Excellence of the auditory faculty of the Arabs—An Arab Camp—Various Tribes in the Regency—Negroes of Algiers—Generally well treated—Superstitious ceremony practised by Mahometans and Jews—The Mozabites—The Piscaris, the night watchmen of Algiers.

It is a mistaken though a common notion that the country of Barbary received that appellation from its barbarism, whereas it was so called from the Berebers, *alias* the Kabyles, having been its oldest inhabitants. The dress of a common Kabyle has a resemblance to that of an Arab, that

often puzzles me to distinguish them. I was told that the rope of camel's hair around his head is an infallible token of the latter; nevertheless, natives have been pointed out to me as assuredly Kabyles, who had the hoods of their mantles tied on their heads in the same manner. The Kabyle, however, more generally wears a woollen cap or callot, like a priest's cowl: his patched and ragged mantle is bound round his middle; and he has as rarely a shoe on his foot as the Arab, though numbers of them in war time go booted and spurred into battle. A few of their tribes, as I have told you, are so fair-complexioned, as to leave a suspicion of their Vandal origin; and Leweson says that some of them still tattoo themselves with the figure of the cross; but I have never seen any of them with light eyes or hair. They are brown-complexioned and black-haired, middle-sized, lean, but sinewy and well made.

Their features are rounder than those of the Arabs, and their noses less aquiline. Their own proper language is different from the Arabic; and there are, inland, mountain tribes where an Arab cannot make himself understood among these old Numidians. Still I suspect that the old Berberic and the Arabic are cognate tongues.

The Kabyle women dress much like the men. They tattoo their legs and arms, and stain their nails and hands like the Arab ladies with the juice of henna, but they never veil their faces. They confirm, however, the philosopher's definition of woman —namely, an animal that delights in finery. Ear-rings and bracelets of gold or silver they will get if they can; but if not, they will sport trinkets of baser metal; and savage as he is, the Kabyle penetrates into mines of iron, copper, and lead.

In their general mode of life they differ little from the Arabs. In every village

they have at least one stone house for their chief, and often several for their elders, besides the Maraboot or chapel; but their common habitations are either huts interwoven with reeds and covered with straw, or tents of camel's hair. Their food is couscousou, or else grain prepared in another manner by being simply crushed, baked into a cake, and cooked under the ashes. This, with Barbary figs, tomatas, onions, long pepper, and rancid oil, together with now and then a little minced meat, constitutes their choicest diet.

The locality of the Kabyles is generally among the heights and fastnesses of the country, where those Numidian highlanders were never perfectly subdued, even by the Romans. The Arabs had never more than a fluctuating supremacy over them, and many of their tribes not only refused to be taxed by the Turks, but drubbed them soundly when they ventured to invade them.

In Leweson's time, when a Turk was insolent, it was a proverb among the Algerines to say, "*Would to God the Kabyles had him, they would teach him to dance!*"

Their mode of warfare, with the exception of fire-arms, is at this day what it was in the days of Sallust. To rout them is not to defeat them, and after the victor has pushed them from one pass, it is safer to let them alone than to pursue them into another. If they could keep together in large alliances, they might defy the world; but they are split into innumerable clans, that make war upon each other. Sometimes their mutual hostilities have a rational pretext. A horrid seducer steals into a camp, and entices a female to throw her blue and tattooed arms around his neck, and to elope with him. The war-cry gets up, and there is a decent degree of fighting. But when there is no such fair cause of quarrel, they will load their guns and spill

blood about the abduction of a sheep, or the robbery of a few dozen of oranges. I believe they are more inhuman to their prisoners than even the Arabs.

A portion of the Kabyles nevertheless succumbed successively both to the Arabs and Turks, and they universally profess Mahometanism. The most influential persons among them, as among all the Mahometans of Barbary, are the Maraboots or holy men, whose name denotes that they are devoted to God. The Maraboot in some respects resembles the Catholic monk; but the title often descends from father to son. Abd-el Kader for instance, the present Prince of Mascara, inherited his father's saintship. I find such contradictory accounts of these holy men, that I am inclined with Leweson to consider them as divisible into two classes of very different character. It is certain that some of them are fanatics, nay, absolute idiots; and these,

of course, are great pets with the vulgar and with women, whilst the sensible Mussulman has a contempt for those slavering saints, though he externally respects them.

But there are Maraboots who maintain their influence by moral means, or who at least turn the reverence of the ignorant to a laudable end. They arbitrate between individuals—they act as ministers of peace between hostile tribes—they stanch blood, and they distribute charity. So at least says my Moorish informant, *Sidy Hamdan Ben-Othman Khoja* *. The influence of the elders of a Kabyle tribe, he says, is nothing compared to that of the Maraboot. He is never addressed by his own name, but always by the title of "My Lord." The people load him with presents—the Kabyle worships him alive, and holds sacred the

* In a work which has been translated from Arabic into French, and is entitled "Aperçu Historique et Statistique sur la Régence d'Alger, intitulé en Arabe Le Miroir."

spot where he is buried. His tomb, and the chapel that covers it, are so venerated, that it shelters the direst criminal. A son durst not wrest from thence the assassin of his own father. The French have occupied many of these places, and fiddled and danced about them with impolitic levity.

One is confused here, with the variety of names applied to the natives. The appellation of *Bedouin* I had always associated exclusively with the idea of an Arab; but mine author, *Hamdan*, says, that it is equally applied to the original Berebers, or Kabyles, and that it comes from the Arabic word *Bedewe*, which signifies a man of the country who shifts his quarters, in opposition to a settled citizen; or, as the Scotch and Dutch would say, *a land-louper*. I understand, however, that neither the Arab nor Kabyle delights in being denominated a Bedouin. In reality, neither of the races deserves universally this appella-

tion, for many of them have villages which they inhabit permanently, except when obliged to flee before an enemy; and even the Kabyle tribes have a dexterity in the manual arts, which they never could have acquired in a purely nomadic state of life.

I have a servant, for instance, whom I have every reason to believe a Kabyle, and whose native village, he tells me, lies fifteen days' journey from Algiers, which must mean at least one hundred and fifty miles. This man repaired for me a pair of pistols, as well as an ordinary gunsmith in England could have done. He tells me that he was bred a gunsmith in his native place, but left it for want of employment, because every other man had learned to make fire-arms. If his account be true (and I see no motive that he can have to deceive me), what a singular circumstance, that the over-competition of artisans should extend to the wilds of Africa! Certain it

is, that the Kabyles practise, though in a rude manner, most of the handicrafts of Europe. They make gunpowder—they have mines, and understand so much of metallurgy as to fabricate bijouterie. The French have confessed their power of manufacturing one little missile-kind of trinket, vulgarly called a leaden bullet, with *heartfelt astonishment.* Nay, their Gallic invaders soon found that those ragged and wretched-looking devils could be artists as well as artisans.

The French had scarcely been two months in Algiers when the scarcity of five-franc pieces was found to be unaccountably diminished by supplies of forged ones from the interior, so dexterously fabricated that a great many of them were current. When the forgery was discovered, it was at first very naturally ascribed to Europeans; but, on better investigation, it was traced up to the descendants of Juba and Jugurtha. The

missionaries of false coinage, who brought it wrapped up in their duds into town, appeared such simple creatures, that for a long time they disarmed suspicion—so true is the adage, that the perfection of art is to conceal art.

The Arabs, descended from those who conquered Barbary at the close of the seventh century, are distinguished from the Kabyles rather by their physiognomy than by their dress. Their features are high and expressive, and you may now and then see among them heads and forms, which a Raphael might transfer to the canvass. At the same time the great mass of them have nothing of the pleasing picturesque in their appearance, but are squalid, and either go barefooted, or at best are shod with bits of untanned hide about their feet. These children of a race who taught arithmetic and algebra to Europe, are now so ignorant, that many of them cannot compute the

years that pass over their heads, or tell the ages of their own children. I have hitherto seen no Arab wearing a turban, nor any one of them who gave you the idea of a wealthy man, excepting one who had a roll of muslin about his head; but whether he was a Sheik or a Maraboot I had no means of ascertaining.

The Arab, I believe, universally covers his head only with the top of his haik or the hood of his bernouse. The haik is the inner coat, the bernouse * is an outer mantle: these constitute the whole raiment of the common Arab, though their sheiks, I am told, affect the embroidered vest of the Turks, and wear inner garments of cloth from the waist to the knees. The Arab women tattoo themselves like the Kabyles, and also stain their hands and nails with henna; but they never dye their

* They are both made of white wool.

black locks, which either flow about their shoulders, or are bound up with a cord or napkin. Their dress is a woollen gown, with short sleeves, bound about the middle; they wear no veils. A sober observer will have no great difficulty in distinguishing a male from a female Arab, if it were only by the beard of the former; but a French soldier informed me, that in storming their villages, he believed, from resemblance of dress, women had been sometimes murdered, because the intoxicated soldiers had not distinguished them from men. "I myself," said the grenadier, "was at a scene of this kind; and *que voulez-vous*," he continued (shrugging his shoulders), "it was either kill or be killed; I sabred a *pauvre diable* who, I am afraid, was a woman, as the figure let a child tumble down. But if so, God will *forgive me, for I was devilishly drunk* *."

* The Arabs are distinguishable from the Moors by the

I hope to be able to tell you more of these simple people, as I project an expe-

harsh loudness of their voices. Accustomed in their thinly-inhabited country to hail each other at great distances, they acquire a habit of stentorian elocution, which they practise in the streets of Algiers, so that you might imagine the hearer was deaf. But no people in the world have a more acute sense of hearing than the Arabs. A person who has travelled among them says, that he has seen individuals who could literally erect their ears at will, and move them like a quadruped. I leave you to laugh at this traveller's story, or believe it, just as you please. But the following instance of the excellence of their auditory faculty was given to me by my gallant and intelligent friend, Captain Lagondie:—During the hostilities not far from Algiers, a troop of French cavalry was missing, and fear was entertained that they had been killed or captured. Captain Lagondie was sent out with two troops of horse to search for them, having with him an Arab on whom he could depend. After sunset, when it was completely dark, they heard the trampling of horses' feet, and Captain Lagondie, joyfully concluding that his missing countrymen were coming up, ordered the trumpet to be blown to welcome them. "Stop, stop," said the Arab guide; "hush! no shouting, no trumpeting. These riders may be Arabs for aught that we know. Let us listen till we hear them speak." Lagondie and his men listened and listened, but could not hear one word. But the Arab's ear was not so obtuse. In a few minutes he said, "Yes—they are French

dition among them, in which I shall sleep under their tents. Hitherto my observations have been confined to a temporary encampment of them near Douera, sixteen miles from Algiers, and even in that visit my curiosity was balked. I took out with me an European, who speaks Arabic, and who promised to be my interpreter. There was no earthly danger, for there was a French camp two thousand strong in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless there were rumours of a murder, lately committed not far from thence, and my kind interpreter, thinking that the better part of valour was discretion, when we approached the barking dogs of the Arabs, turned his horse's head and retreated. As there would have been no use in going among people with whom I could not exchange a word, I was

—at least they are not speaking Arabic." He could hear words articulated, where an European ear could not discern a syllable.

obliged to follow his example, after riding up to the black tents, and seeing that men, women, children, and cattle, were apparently all housed under the same roofs.

Among the hundred or more Arab tribes in the Regency, it is but vaguely that the French themselves can compute the number of those who are friendly to them, or the reverse. But of those inhabiting about the city of Algiers at distances varying from five to twenty-four hours' march, (I doubt if you can estimate an hour's march at so much as a league,) the four nearest tribes at present are reckoned decidedly friendly. And it is a remarkable fact, which bears rather against the scepticism I have expressed as to the success of colonial production, that the tribe of Beni-Mouca, within five short leagues to the east of Algiers, cultivate cotton and opium, as well as that the tribe of Beni-Khalil, only three leagues farther off, rear cotton, rice, and

tobacco. The armed men of those friendly tribes are reckoned at one thousand three hundred and thirty. Ten other tribes, within the distance from the capital which I have mentioned, are found to be at least peaceable, and are not in the custom of committing hostilities, but bring abundance of fruits, among others, delicious oranges and citrons, as well as wood, charcoal, grain, and cattle, to the market of Algiers.

Five tribes, four of them lying to the west, among whom the Hadjouds are the most considerable, are set down by the French as directly hostile. The Hadjouds can bring four hundred men into the field. Their territory comprehends the little city of Koleah. Those tribes, even under the Dey, were but half subdued. Of the Arabs in the territories of Bona, Bougia, and Oran, I shall speak to you when I visit those places, as I hope shortly to do.

The negroes of Algiers constitute a not

uninteresting class of the population. From time immemorial, the Moors and Arabs of northern Africa have imported from the interior black slaves of both sexes. The number of negroes, in the city of Algiers, is about one thousand eight hundred. Some of them are free; but as the law stands at present, negro slavery is not abolished here, nor to my knowledge has any law been passed by the French against the African slave-trade by land; but I believe that they intend soon to promulgate an edict to that effect, and in the mean time any master who should murder, or even much maltreat a slave, is amenable to certain punishment. At the same time, unless I am misled by my willingness to believe a general and agreeable assertion, black slavery here wears no very frightful aspect. The contempt for a sable skin is certainly nothing so strong as it is in the West Indies and North America, for there

are many instances of Moors marrying negresses; and though it is admitted that a black fellow will now and then get a smack with a stick from his master, he is in general attached to him, and the Algerines boast that, during the late invasion, not a single negro deserted to the French camp. I had a conversation yesterday with a wealthy Moor who has twenty-two blacks in his establishment. He said,—"As to my black servants conspiring against me, I have no more apprehension of it than of my own children attempting my life." The heart yearns to believe such information.

I have just returned this morning from witnessing a superstitious ceremony, which, though unwarranted by the Koran, is practised by all the Mahometans here, black, brown, and white; nay, by Jews also. It consists in sacrificing the life of some eatable animal to one of the devils who inhabit

certain fountains near Algiers. The number of bedeviled fountains in the Regency, is a point in Algerine demonology which I cannot ascertain. Some say there are seven, and others seventy. Be that as it may, the devil is coaxed out of his well by the slaughter of some warm-blooded animal fit for human food, the meat of which is afterwards cooked and administered to the sick, who recover by tasting it.

The ceremony which I saw took place on the sea-shore. All that were present were negroes, except myself and a Marseillese merchant who understands Arabic; and who had the goodness to explain to me the language and nature of the sacrifice. A black high-priest, a sub-deacon, and two negress priestesses presided at the ceremony; though, excepting their functions, and taking money, they bore no indications of priesthood. The offering consisted of fowls. The priest and people joined in a

loud song quite worthy of the devil, turning all the while their faces to the east. The victims were dipped in the *sacred* sea, as Homer calls it, after which the high-priest took them to a neighbouring fountain, and having waved his knife thrice around the head of an old woman who sat squatting beside it, cut their throats; and the devotees concluded their solemnity by a general giggle at the cries of the pullets, who seemed the only personages in the scene that disliked it.

Among the population of Algiers I ought to have mentioned the Mozabites, who come from the Desert, and who, though evidently not negroes, are so dark in complexion, that I know not under what race to rank them. These far-off visitants have the monopoly of several trades here. They superintend the mills, the butcheries, and the baths. This useful corporation makes frequent journies to the Desert, from

whence they import ostrich-feathers, and have retained under the French, the monopoly which they enjoyed under the Dey. From the same country of those Beni-Mozeb, or Mozabites, come the Piscaris, who are the night-watchmen of Algiers. After a certain hour you see them sleeping in their ragged bernouses, on benches before the shops. They form a corporation, whose deacon makes a convention with the shopkeepers to insure them against robbery at a certain price, and they are so vigilant, that shop-lifting scarcely ever occurs. What amusingly various aspects human nature assumes in this country, and how many resources would they not afford to an ingenious novelist!

LETTER VIII.

Bad reputation of the Restaurants at Algiers—The Climate —Clearness of the Atmosphere—Queries proposed as to the French holding possession of this part of Africa —Considerations on the Questions proposed—France not disposed to abandon the Colony—A whimsical circumstance—Expense of retaining Algiers—Arab Cavalry—Might be rendered a productive Colony— Doubts as to ancient Numidia having been the granary of the Romans—The Mountains rich in Metals and Timber—Fossil Salt in the eastern parts adequate to the supply of the whole world—The Vine—The Tobacco-plant—The Olive—The Silk-worm—Capable of immense production—Natives dislike the French— A Moor's opinion of them—Mussulman hatred of the Jews—The African wealth of France, calculated to make her a better customer to England—French occupation of Algiers likely to promote the civilization of Africa—Ignorance and Poverty of the native population—Effects of the doctrine of Fatalism—Want of knowledge in Medicine and Surgery—Enormous Mortality and Suffering—France, if disposed to retain Algiers, will learn the policy of being just and humane.

WHENEVER the steam-packet comes in, I

speed to the post-office, where, thanks to my stars and my friends, I never fail to find kind letters from England, and then the "*Cherub Content*" flutters his wings over my heart. How do I continue to like this place? is your first question. Why, wonderfully well, considering all its discomforts. The worst thing is, that the restaurants have got a bad reputation. Do they deserve it? No; on my honour and conscience, I do not believe one word of the calumny; but Algiers is an ill-speaking place, and they say that when you are devouring what is called lamb or mutton, you may be unconsciously eating of a gigot of jackall or haunch of hyæna. I repeat to you my sincere faith, that this is all falsehood and scandal; but still, though Othello was not a jealous man, he was made miserable by insinuations; and in like manner, when I sit down sharp-set to my plate of mutton, I am haunted with chimerical fears

that I may be faring on the lion's provider. God pity the man who has one misgiving thought about either his mutton or his marriage-bed!

"Who doats, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves."

Again, you say, what is the climate of Algiers? From all that I can observe and learn, if we except some spots on the Matidjah and about Bona, it is a healthy climate. The heat was great when I arrived, but I never felt it quite intolerable except on one occasion, and then only for a very short time. In the middle of one night of September I awoke from sleep, in a breathless and burning heat, though I was conscious that I had neither ate nor drank anything that ought to have fevered me. I got up and opened the window, that I might respire more freely; but the air that rushed in was like the heat from a baker's oven, and made me fall half insensible on the floor for several minutes. I recovered,

however, and was well enough next day to tell the accident to my friends. "Poh," they said, "that was nothing but a visit of the simoom, or wind of the Desert, who had heard of your arrival at Algiers, and thought it his duty to pay his respects to you." "Thank God," I replied, "that he was not a long-winded visiter!"

Well, but with all its faults, I like Algiers. I can easily get out of the dismal city, and outside the walls everything is beautiful. When I sally forth from the gate of Bab-el-Oued, the bold sea-beach smells so freshly, and sounds so musically, that I little wonder at Homer calling the sea "*Divine*." The air of autumn nerves my limbs, and the atmosphere is so clear, that I feel as if a veil of gauze had been removed from my eyes since I looked on the scenery of Europe. Every object—every turf and tree is so distinct a mile off, that it seems to me as if I could touch them.

They look like a picture held up to the eyes by the close light of a candle. I can fancy the Father of Nature himself enjoying the beauties of his own creation, and admiring, by the light of the blessed sun,

"His children's looks that brighten at the blaze."

But your letter challenges me to subjects of more matter-of-fact consideration. Before I can attempt to answer what you ask me about Algiers, I must reduce your desultory questions into distinct heads. Query 1st. Will the French retain this colony? Query 2nd. If they do retain it, will they profit by it? Query 3rd. How do the natives like the French? Query 4th. Will the advantages likely to be derivable by France from Algiers be pernicious to Great Britain? And, query 5th. Will the French possession of this part of Africa be a benefit to the general cause of civilization?

I venture on these questions rather as a diffident speculator, than as one hoping to

solve them. After all, can you expect me to predict infallibly what the French may do with Algiers, when, at this moment, the French nation itself scarcely knows its own mind upon the subject. But offering my opinion at the lowest rate at which you may value it, I do think that the French will keep Algiers, being pledged thereunto by their national pride. I am led to this opinion by the conversations I have had with their officers, civil and military; and I am certain that I have had more frank (observe, I do not say confidential) intercourse with them than any Englishman who has been here since the conquest. The French mind seems to me to wince at the idea of abandoning the colony, and above all at the slightest hint of England interfering against their possession of it. If you wish them to retain Algiers, your surest way is to begin to squabble about it.

A whimsical circumstance has by chance

broken that reserve between the French and myself, which our nationality might have otherwise created. They found by chance in Algiers a volume of "Blackwood's Magazine*," in which I am described as a man eaten up with Gallicism; one who, if a French and English regiment were about to charge each other, would wager in favour of the French. Now this calumny nettled me; and I wished Blackwood at the black devil. I protested indignantly, to the first French party I went into—(it was at General Voirol's)—that I was no Gallican—no renegade. My regard for France, I said, impairs not one iota of my native patriotism. Because I love my mother, is it necessary that I

* "Blackwood's Magazine" treats me as if it were a playful cat. Upon the whole, exceedingly kind, it often purrs applause beyond my deserts; but, anon, it puts the claws out of the velvet sheath, and gives me a scratch that makes me suck my bleeding finger.

should spit in the face of every other decent old woman that I may meet with? Well, the French took my word for this; but they insisted that I had no Antigallican prejudices—no, none whatever. And one good effect has resulted to me from this character—namely, that they have put up with my speaking more plain truths to them than they would have otherwise borne, and that seeing me an undisguised man they are outspoken with me. I am much mistaken if their national pride will speedily submit to resign Algiers, although it costs them at this moment about a million and a half sterling a year for the support of somewhat less than thirty thousand soldiers, the expense of the civil government included.

The chance of the natives turning them out of the country, I reckon as nothing, and even their power of opposing their further invasion I should calculate not to be great;

especially, if the French were to employ more cavalry and light artillery, instead of mainly depending on their infantry. The foot soldier, loaded with arms and equipage, under a climate that alternates deluges of rain with burning heat, and frequently in a hilly country, is very unfairly tried against Arabian cavalry, which is the best in the world at desultory warfare.

To see the mounted Arab sweeping down declivities, on which no jockey of England would venture, would make your head spin round, and when he fires and manœuvres, you would imagine him a piece of his own horse. My astonishment is, that the little Frenchman, at one time drenched to the marrow with rain, and at other times dissolved in heat like a boiled onion, has been able to cope so well as he has done, with this enemy. But the French will improve in their warfare by experience. At present they have somewhat under five hun-

dred Arab cavalry in their pay, but if they choose to increase their number, they will be able, in all probability, to conquer the country.

Whether they will choose to do so or not, is a different question. Bonaparte would have settled the matter sooner. Instead of groping and pawing about for the partial conquest of a coast five hundred miles in extent, he would have struck up at once to Constantina, into the heart of the regency. My opinion, then is, that if the French be true to their feeling of national glory, they are able to retain, and to extend, their dominion over Algiers.

Query 2. Will her occupation of the colony repay France for her expenses, present and to come? Certainly not for a long time; but, I should venture to think that it will do so ultimately. The golden prospect from indigo, cotton, sugar, and cochineal may have been exaggerated; and as to corn,

I cannot understand how a country so little irrigated could ever have been a granary to the Romans. That fact is no doubt asserted about ancient Numidia, and you will observe that the said tradition would fall in pat with my purpose, if I were engaged as a special pleader to argue what is, nevertheless, my general opinion; that this colony might be made in the end a most productive colony to France. But the Cereal renown of old Numidia is, I confess, to me a stumbling-block. As it is written in Greek and Latin, I am bound to believe it; but as a matter of comprehension, I give up the problem.

North America, I suspect, will, for an indefinite number of years, rear Indian corn and all manner of grain cheaper than it can be cultivated here. But, on this account, I am far from surrendering my main position, that Algiers might be made a richly available colony to France. It is

a conquerable country. Its mountains are rich in metals and timber. In its eastern parts, towards Oran and Mostaganem, there is fossil or spontaneous salt enough to supply the whole world with that article; and if the vine, the tobacco-plant, the olive, and the silk-worm were cherished, the whole universe might sit down with oil to their salads, with silken velvet on their backs, and with cigars and wine at the cost of half nothing.

Query 3rd. How do the natives like the French? To be plain, I do not think they have yet acquired a taste for them. The Jews complain that, since the arrival of the French, there has been "*Point de commerche;*" and the only Turk whose acquaintance I have made, cuts me short from all conversation about them by exclaiming *Bestia!* To be sure, poor fellow, he owes them no love, for they thumped and misused him shamefully. The Moors

are reserved in their conversation. Only on one occasion have I met with a rich, influential individual among them from whom I could elicit a sincere opinion; but as I got it under his own roof, and with no warrant to publish it, I omit his name. I said to him, that I would give much to know his sentiments respecting the French. He eyed me significantly, and replied through the interpreter, "I will answer you with another question. How would you like the French if they had come into England, dug up the bones of your parents and countrymen, and sent off a shipload of them to be used by the sugar-bakers of France?" Here he alluded to the French having made a highway through the Moorish cemetery at the Bab-el-Oued gate at Algiers; and though for this operation they had the tyrant plea of necessity, I believe they conducted it unfeelingly, and allowed their soldiers to pilfer the marble turbans that

adorned the most respected tombs. As to the shipfull of bones and the sugar-bakers, I cannot so well vouch for that story.

Before we parted, my entertainer expressed himself very freely about the Jews. He told me, with fierce delight in his countenance, that one satisfaction which the Mussulmans would enjoy in case of a change would be the punishment of those Hebrew dogs. "They insulted us," he said, "the day after the entry of the French, and the day after their departure we should have our revenge." From all that he told me, I believe that barbarous civil wars would be the result of France suddenly abandoning this conquest, and that the miserable Jews would stand a chance of being generally massacred.

I come to the next question.—Whether Old England will suffer damage by the French possession of Algiers? You ask me how I can tolerate the idea of France continuing in

possession of so large a portion of Northern Africa, and of thus beginning to realize Buonaparte's idea of converting the Mediterranean into a great French lake? Let the French, you say, once settle themselves at Algiers, and they will by and bye extend themselves right and left to Tunis and Morocco; Gibraltar and Malta will then cease to be ours. But this is all a vision. It requires France, at the present moment, to support thirty thousand men, each man on an average costing 40*l.* a year, in order to keep hold of a few stations on the African coast. Let her conquests extend to Morocco and Tunis, and with ninety thousand men for her African army she would have a yearly expense of between four and five millions.

Further, you ask my opinion whether it would not be worth our while to put in a word against the said possession, as well as to claim for ourselves some portion of the

Algerine coast—say Oran? I have given you my opinion that, in the long run, much wealth might accrue from the colony to France; but I am not ashamed to say that it is only a conjectural opinion. However, supposing the country to be *ultimately* productive to France, (its speedy productiveness is palpably out of the question,) is it certain and necessary that the wealth of our neighbours would be ruinous to us? I think not. I suspect that the issue might be quite the contrary, and that the African wealth of France might make her a better customer to our manufacturers.

As to our claiming a part of the coast, if we had it, it would only involve us in garrison expenses, and be a source of quarrels with France, like those which arose out of the juxtaposition of our colonies and theirs in North America: nay more, the French would not concede an inch of the coast, unless England were to negotiate with her

hand on the hilt of her sword; and what Englishman, at this time of day, would suffer his beer to be taxed one farthing in the hogshead for the sake of a war about Algiers? The idea is preposterous.

Next comes the more extensive question, —how far the general cause of human happiness and civilization is likely to be affected by the French occupation of Algiers? I address you as one who believes that, if civilization and happiness be not synonymous terms, civilization, at least, diminishes the horrors of human misery. If I thought otherwise, I should not discuss the subject with you.

The moment an Englishman can divest himself of apprehensions, as I think he safely may, that the French can do any harm to England by retaining Algiers, it will be natural, on the first view of the subject, for the liberality of his heart to argue thus:—France is by much the more civi-

lized nation, and her dominion ought to insure some chance of civilization, as she has already brought into Algiers the abolition of hideous punishments, and the knowledge of arts and sciences that diminish bigotry and barbarism. Yes, my friend, this position is true; and its truth is some consolation to me. When I go out to the gate of Babazoun, and am shown the spot where the Jews used to be burned alive, and where criminals were precipitated from a high wall, to be caught by hooks halfway down, and detained in tortures for perhaps a week, I bless the event that has put Algiers under any dominion that will exclude such horrors.

At the outside of that dreadful gate, as late as 1813, a friend of mine, too authentic an informant, saw a state criminal chained to a post to be starved alive. The sufferer was a florid, stout man on the first day of his punishment, and he bore the pangs of

famine for several days with heroic fortitude · but, on the ninth day, he was heard screaming for water to quench his thirst, and died with his bones coming through his skin.

Further, in spite of all that I hear and see as to the difficulty of getting the natives to coalesce with their conquerors, I cannot divest my mind of the idea that the French will ultimately plant here the most important arts and sciences that tend to abate human misery. The Mussulman's bigotry must ultimately retreat before civilization; and God knows there is room enough for improvement in this barbarous land.

The native population, though it will sometimes show you heads and forms worthy of a scriptural picture, exhibits incomparably more numerous objects of such wretchedness as you would not meet with in a European city: elephantiasis and blindness are excessively common; and

disease and poverty may be said to walk the streets. Until the French arrived, there was scarcely a European surgeon or physician in the regency, except some runaway druggists' 'prentices from Christendom; now, there is an established school both of surgery and medicine, under the inspection of talented men.

The doctrine of fatalism opposes itself *in limine* to the very profession of medicine and surgery. A French officer, who has written an account of the conquest, describes an interesting scene which he witnessed between a young Arab, who was brought in wounded to the French camp, and his aged father, who came to visit him. The leg-bone of the youth had been shattered, but his life might have been saved by amputation of the limb. The old man hung over him in agony, beseeching him not to offend God and Mahomet by submitting to the operation. His son fol-

lowed the advice, and Mahomet took him to himself in reward of his piety. There are, nevertheless, Moors and Jews who pretend to make both clinical and surgical cures, and women who are called in as *sages femmes;* but the native doctors know not a tittle of anatomy, and scarcely the names of their own medicines, many of which are noxious in the cases in which they are prescribed.

In surgery, they understand not even the use of a lancet. They console the cholic, the stone, and pleurisy with the application of red-hot iron to the suffering parts. This treatment often elicits shrieks of assurance from the patients that they are perfectly cured, and entreaties that the application may be removed. They bleed and amputate with a razor, and stop hæmorrhage with boiling pitch. Dr. Abernethy, in lecturing on the disease of wens, said that he knew not how to cure them, and that

perhaps whistling to them was not the worst prescription. In like manner, it is possible that the amulets bestowed on the Algerines by their holy maraboots, are amongst the most innocent of their cures.

Enormous mortality and suffering necessarily result from this ignorance of the healing art. For *one* hideous malady they know no sort of remedy. The blood of the sufferer runs infected in his veins all his life, and makes his children also its victims. When the plague used to come here, its ravages exceeded all conception: whole villages and cities have been known to be unpeopled by it; harvests to have rotted on the ground for want of reapers; and flocks and herds to have wandered wide without a master. Large encampments of the Arabs might be met with, where the dead lay unburied under their tents. Leweson, who witnessed the plague of Algiers in 1787, says that, of an evening, the only sounds to be

heard were the lamentations at funerals and the howlings of the jackals.

I am restrained only by the disagreeableness of the subject from mentioning other instances of the human misery resulting from ignorance and barbarism in this country; but I assure you that I have seen enough to convince me that the retention of the country by France as a *point d'appui* for the entrance of European civilization into Africa, is a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

I have already alluded more than once to the faults which the French have committed since their occupation of the colony, including, under the gentle denomination of faults, a few useless murders committed on the natives. With regard to this subject, however, I am deterred from bestowing my prolixity upon you by two considerations. In the first place, the French themselves speak with regret of those occur-

rences which have sullied their character for humanity: their press has indignantly exposed them; and, it is my firm opinion, if France perseveres in retaining Algiers, that she will learn, as we ourselves have certainly learned in India, to a certain degree, the policy of being just and humane. In the next place, I should feel it my duty, as an Englishman criminating the cruelties of the French in northern Africa, to cast a glance at the question whether our own conduct in Caffraria has been perfectly immaculate? In my opinion, the latter country could make out a stronger case against us than Algiers could against the French; so, on this topic, I shall abstain from drawing up any special indictment against the French, though I leave you to understand in general that their conduct would admit of amelioration.

LETTER IX.

French mismanagement — Captain Saphor — Unexpected meeting with a French translator of my own Poems —Count D'Erlon — His partiality for the English —Proclamation of the Governor — Fête in honour of the New Governor—Courtesy of the French Authorities—Severity of the French Penal Code—Punishment of the Pillory—Instance of a French Officer—Death of his wife from grief—The Galleys—Remonstrance with the Procureur on the use of the Pillory at Algiers—Colonel Maret—Ben Omar—Description of an entertainment at the house of the latter—His little Nephew—No wine either at or after dinner—Hints given in reference to "*the liquid ruby*"—Extensive establishment of Ben Omar—Tombs of the six Deys beheaded on one day—Anecdote of an Algerine Turk.

A PROMINENT trait in the French mismanagement of this colony is their so often changing the Governor-General. The successor to Voirol, who has just arrived, will make the sixth that they have had in five years—Bourmont, Clausel, Berthezène,

Duc de Rovigo, Voirol, and D'Erlon. General Voirol, however, is not to leave Algiers immediately: this is to me an agreeable circumstance, as he is a frank, kind-hearted Helvetian, who has shown me much hospitality.

It was singular that I should meet under his roof with a translator of my own poems. Calling one day at the General's, I was shown into a room where his secretary, Captain Saphor, was sitting at his papers. He rose to receive me with uncommon cordiality, and expressed a wish to make my acquaintance, saying, "I have read your poetry," &c. &c. &c. "Pshaw," I said, "you Frenchmen are always paying compliments; I'll be sworn, now, you never read two lines I ever indited." "But I beg your pardon," he replied, pulling out a drawer and handing me several clean-written sheets. "That is a specimen of what I have already done in the translation of

your poems, and I mean to translate them all, if my military life will allow me leisure." I read the version, though I cannot say coolly or candidly; my heart, suborned by vanity and gratitude, knocked up my head from being an impartial critic, and my nerves were flustered (to use the title of a comedy ascribed to the late Lord L———) by the "*Unexpected Surprise*." Besides, it is only a Frenchman who can judge competently of the French style; but everybody gives Saphor the character of a highly-accomplished man.

A day or two after the new governor's arrival our consul waited upon him, and took me with him for presentation. Count D'Erlon received us very civilly. Though he has not the hearty manners of his predecessor, he is a gentlemanlike old man. His age is said to be sixty-nine; but he looks much older, owing no doubt to his hard military life. He has an excellent

reputation as a soldier; but a more unworn man methinks would better suit the critical state of the colony. The Count is splendidly lodged in a house that belonged to the son of that Dey of Algiers whose death made way for the last one, Hussein Pasha: the chambers present alcoves and recesses, gilt on the ceilings with Barbaric gold. His Excellency seated the British consul, the vice-consul, and myself on a sofa, drew in his chair beside us, and talked in the warmest manner of his partiality for the English. The source of his affection for our countrymen was his having fought so many bloody battles with them in the Spanish Peninsula.

We have a proverb in the North, "that scratching and biting is Scotch folk's wooing;" in like manner, it would seem that Count D'Erlon's love for us had been won by being so often brought up to the scratch. "Ah! what brave men," he exclaimed,

"are the British soldiers; and how loyal their officers, and what courtesy, nay, brotherly love, subsisted between the combatants!" In short, he could not express the tenderness with which the French and English cut each others' throats during the Peninsular campaigns. "What has become," he said, "of your famous General *Eel?* I have had many parleys with that gallant man." "Eel," I thought to myself, "that is a military fish I never heard of;" but Mr. St. John at once enlightened my mind by saying to the Count, "*General Lord Hill is now Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces.*"

The new Governor has made his *début* to-day by a proclamation to the natives, which is worthy of Mawworm, and begins thus:—"In the name of God, clement and merciful! Praise be to God, the Lord of the Universe, who will judge us all at the day of judgment! We hope in his good-

ness and we repose upon his strength. It is he who rewards the good, and who punishes the wicked; for he knows our *most* secret thoughts, and nothing is hid from him. At the end of ages he will raise up the dead; for he is all-powerful and alone powerful." After this, Count D'Erlon styles himself Khalif of the King of the French, and he endites his proclamation "*To all Arabs, great and small.*"

The Moors of Algiers have been forced to get up a voluntary fête in honour of the new governor; I was present at it when it was celebrated in one of the largest houses of Algiers. The entertainment consisted of coffee and sweetmeats, and dancing in the French style. Of course, the Moors never dance; but they had a concert of their own music, and miserable it was. I was touched with compassion when I heard the discord of their barbarous instruments, that outraged harmony and melody, and seemed

to mock even their own humiliation. They seemed to me more pitiable than the Hebrews by the waters of Babylon.

You advise me not to speak my mind too freely among the French. It is good counsel. Decorum enjoins that a stranger, plumped so freshly among them as myself, should be reserved in passing judgments on their colonial policy in a settlement so full of difficulties. I keep this maxim in view; and, except by some random words about the Pépinière, I have never found that I have given them offence. I must say also that the leading officers, both civil and military, whose acquaintance I have made, treat me in the most amicable spirit, and there is no courtesy lost between us. On certain sore points respecting their maltreatment of the natives, I purposely abstain from all declamation, because I see, by the French press, that the nation at large is sensitive on the subject; and I

have the fullest hopes that ameliorated conduct will result from the reflections of the French themselves. At the same time, on any point where I find their minds obtuse, I will frankly own to you that I abandon reserve, and speak out to them like a true citizen of the world.

Whilst a chance remains that this colony may introduce civilization into Africa, I cannot look down the vista of futurity with indifference, or converse perpetually on so interesting a subject with locked-up thoughts. I admire several traits in their penal code; but I cannot forbear telling them that it is still, if possible, more merciless and unmeasured than our own. I have studied in detail, from the most authentic documents, their whole system of galley-slavery, and it is enough to make the flesh creep on your bones.

Further, they have not abolished the practice of exposition on the pillory—a

mode of punishment which would puzzle the author of evil himself to surpass, in devising means for hardening the shamelessness of guilt, for excluding the possibility of reformation, for torturing penitence to despair, and for degrading at once the sufferer and the spectator. And yet it was but the other day that I heard of a French officer, nominally and in rank a gentleman, having been condemned to be put into the pillory, and exhibited in the public square. Do you blame me that, in every company I went into, I spoke freely against the pillorying of a European amidst a rabble of Moors, Kabyles, and Jewish shoe-blacks? The wretched object of this sentence is, I grant you, an adventurer. He obtained, I know not how, in Spain or Portugal, the rank of a lieutenant-colonel; but he is evidently a bad subject, from his having been convicted of scraping silver off five-franc pieces. Very well, and let him

be punished condignly; still, however, let justice be tempered with mercy. After standing in the pillory for an hour, he is to be sent for ten years to the galleys. The galleys alone, one would think, was punishment enough for any crime short of murder. When the poor devil heard of his presentation to the mob of Algiers being about to be an overture to his other sufferings, he exclaimed, "I might survive all the rest of my punishment, but the pillory will kill me." Unfortunately, he was the husband of an amiable woman, whose family is highly respectable. When the officers of justice led him away to prison, his wife was left alternately swooning and convulsed in her lone lodgings, with scarcely a franc to purchase medicines for restoring her. They conveyed her to the hospital, where she lay for three days moaning and complaining that her heart was bursting

and would break: on the third day, she died literally of grief*.

The day that I heard of this sentence, I dined by invitation tête-à-tête with M. Laurence, the Procureur du Roi, and I did not lose that opportunity of arguing against the superfluous, not to say impolitic barbarity, of superadding the pillory to so severe a sentence. I combated his doctrine, that law has a right to inflict the moral torture of disgrace on any peccant individual, to a degree that utterly shuts out the possibility of his future reconcilement to society. I said, " If you choose to

* The letter in which I wrote an account of this case to a friend in England is now before me; but it is torn, by the opening of the seal, exactly at the place where I mentioned the particulars of the sentence. I believe I understate it, from fear of going beyond the mark. If I could confide in my memory, I should say that the culprit was condemned to twenty years at the galleys. That he was sentenced to at least ten years of galley slavery I could depone to having heard.

hang a man for scraping silver coins, you give him a brief punishment, the public ignominy of which, whilst it is unavoidable, is perhaps assuaged by its awfulness. Even by going to the galleys, no doubt this miserable man will lose character, and small may be the chance of his ever redeeming it. But why wantonly annihilate the last vestige of such a chance, by driving his soul to despair even before he goes to the galleys? Oh! Sir," I said, "in the name of civilization, I appeal to you to apply to the high authorities at home, and to spare us the sight of a European in a pillory of Algiers. Is it thus that you are introducing civilization into Africa?" The Procureur at first looked gravely; but, when my remonstrance grew warm, he burst into a loud laugh. "C'est bien drole," he said, "that a poet should be lecturing the first law-officer of Algiers!" I implored him to consider my very free-

dom of speech as a mark of my confidence in his humanity, and to forgive my zeal, if it had unintentionally any appearance of officiousness. He replied, "I give you credit for good motives, and *I will think over this matter* *."

Among the French, from whom I have experienced civilities here, I have particularly to thank Colonel Maret for his efforts to procure me the best specimens of Algerine poetry. Indifferent, I must own, are the best; but that is not the fault of the gallant Colonel. He mentioned my name to Ben Omar, the ex-Bey of Titeri, who, though no longer a prince, is one of the richest and most influential Moors at Algiers, and counts a Dey amongst his nearest ancestors. Colonel Maret brought me

* That my advice had any influence I scarcely flatter myself. I rather believe that the alteration of this poor man's destiny arose from fortuitous circumstances; but so it was, that his exposition in Algiers never took place.

next day an invitation to dine with him, which was doubly gratifying to me as a mark of hospitality from a total stranger, and as a means of seeing, at least, as much of the domestic manners of the Moors as can be exhibited in a dinner from which the charm of woman's society is shut out.

At six o'clock I repaired in company with the Colonel to the town-house of Ben Omar. It is situated in one of the gloomiest alleys of Algiers; but it is nobly furnished within. At the servants' lodge, or floor that enters from the ground, a nephew of our host, a sprightly lad about thirteen, dressed so becomingly that he might have trod the stage, welcomed us both, and shook us by the hand. The negroes in the hall told us that their master was not yet arrived from the country, but might be expected every moment; and, in the mean time, they requested us to walk upstairs. Colonel Maret, however, who perfectly

understands both the Arabic language and Moorish etiquette, told me that it would be thought more polite if we were to wait for his ex-highness's arrival. The tread of his horse very soon announced his coming, and the quadruped preceded Ben Omar in entering the ground floor, through which he passed into his stable.

Our host apologized in French, which he speaks very fairly, for having detained us; he then took a candle, and gave another to his chief negro, and by the light of these we marched upstairs to the *salle à manger*. It is a room after the Moorish fashion, which I have already described, with the difference of having only one upper side room divided from the one below by a curtain of silk richly embroidered. The walls are hung with an infinity of pistols, guns, scimitars, and yataghans, ornamented with gold, silver, mother-of-pearl, and ivory. The ottomans, too low to be called sofas,

are of rich crimson silk, well besmeared with gold.

My attention, however, was diverted from contemplating inanimate objects, by a living bit of furniture in the room, namely, the younger nephew of our host, a boy about four and a half years old. I never saw puerile beauty to match this indescribable cherub, with his large blue eyes and auburn hair. What is painting, what is statuary, to the living workmanship of nature? The beauty of the little infidel made me faithless to the curiosity which I owed to the scene before me, and I could rivet my eyes only on him, whilst the ex-Bey was courteously describing his curious armoury, and showing us his Damascus blades, with minute histories of many persons of distinction whom they had had the honour of decapitating.

The guests were Colonel Maret, two other Frenchmen, and myself. Our host placed

me on an ottoman, and, after taking a few whiffs of a long pipe, handed it to me moist from his own lips, as the greatest respect that can be shown to a stranger. At last, the dinner-table was brought in, or rather a large round tin tray, which was placed on a slight elevation from the floor. In the midst of it was a bowl of exquisite rice-soup, and each of us having squatted himself cross-legged on a low cushion like so many tailors, we were helped to a plateful of soup a-piece, and we fed ourselves with wooden spoons. The plates were fine English porcelain. Before each of us was placed a long napkin, which our host told me was of Smyrna cloth. Next came a large broiled fish, deliciously flavoured and stuffed with pudding: it was sent round, and every one clutched a portion of it with his fingers and thumb. By my faith, I thought, on tasting this regale, for aught that the French can do in civilizing African

cookery, they may as well stay at home. I was so pleased with the fish, that I desired to be helped a second time from it; whereupon the *ex-Bey*, with *exemplary* politeness, grasped a handful of it, and laid it on my plate.

Behold, my friend, what it is to move in high life, and to see the world! Presently we had roasted fowls, flanked by some savoury dishes of vegetables, well soused with oil, and by and bye followed couscousou. The pullets were torn asunder by strength of hand, but with ineffable delicacy. Meanwhile, my heart was yearning after the rich legumes that were floating in gravy, as golden bright as the clouds of a summer sunset. There was no spoon, and so I poured a part of the vegetables on my plate, and, by the aid of a piece of bread, and my spoonless fingers, whipped considerable portions into my mouth. "For shame!" methinks you are already exclaiming: "is

this your high life, to sit pawing your food like a squirrel? Could you not have asked for a spoon?" Well, I did so when the couscousou came in; but, in the mean time, I was desperately hungry. For the glorious couscousou we of Christendom were allowed spoons, and though our words could not describe its relish, our mouths did it ample justice without uttering a word. Since the days of my boyhood I never ate a heartier dinner:

> But pleasures are like poppies spread,
> We seize the flower—its bloom is fled;
> Or, like the snow-falls on the river,
> A moment white, then gone for ever.

How limited is all human felicity! In twenty minutes I found that my appetite was playing me false, and that I was tasting the subsequent dishes of the feast rather out of courtesy than inclination. Ben Omar, who was attentive to us all, but particularly to his English guest, pressed

me frequently. I asked him if it was a custom in the better society of this country to press the stranger to his food. "Not at all," he said; "but I only recommend our ragouts to you as the pride of our cuisine. You are rather a poor eater," he added, "or you don't like my dinner?" "A poor eater!" I replied. "My excellent host, I have that within me which assures my conscience of having done ample justice to your hospitality."

All this time, nevertheless, I was conscious of making but a miserable figure as an eater by the side of the other Christian convives. There was Colonel Maret, a bold dragoon, six feet some inches high, who might stand for the picture of Sir William Wallace. But there were two skinny Frenchmen who beat even him all to nothing at the board of nourishment. The stomachs of Pharaoh's lean kine seemed to have transmigrated into their bodies, and

to have pressed them to the twentieth dish that went round would have been a work of supererogation. The dessert was of a piece with the dinner, presenting a vast variety of fruits both fresh and confected. We had now spoons of tortoiseshell, with handles made either entirely of sea-horse tooth, or of ivory with amber tops. The porcelain was very rich, and Ben Omar told me to my surprise that it came, like the dinner plates, all from England. After washing our hands, we had pipes and coffee, with silver-wire wine-cups supporting the English ones.

We sat conversing till ten o'clock. I need not tell you that we had no wine, either at or after dinner; and the want of that comfort, you know, is apt to dispose an English mind to pensiveness after a hearty meal. I thought of Philoctetes in the desert island, when the Chorus laments that the genial wine-cup is never raised to

his lips. I regretted in my heart that so perfect a gentleman as Ben Omar should live in a state of *Mahometan delusion;* and recalling to mind the pious clergymen of Scotland, I acknowledged how justly they had denounced that *Arch-impostor Mahomet.*

Colonel Maret and our host maintained an animated conversation; but I found the same fault with it that the Athenians alleged against one of their dramas, that it was *ουδεν προς Διονυσον*—*i. e.*, had nothing to do with Bacchus. By and bye a thought touched and tickled my fancy. Were I to give a hint for a drop of "*the liquid ruby,*" and were our host to grant it, what a triumph over the infidels would it be—far beyond that of the crusaders, who only poured out their blood—if I could make them shed their wine! But, by this time, I fear your delicacy may again be taking alarm, and soliloquizing thus:—"What, ask for wine under the roof of a hospitable

Mussulman!"—Oh no; I did not ask, I only hinted, and so distantly, that the hint would not reach. My motive, I also assure you, was not so much the love of wine, as the indulgence of a jocular thought.

I turned the conversation to the subject of Arabic literature, not that I cared half a straw at that moment about Arabic literature, but, because it gave me an opportunity of asking about some songs in the poetry of the Mussulmans which extol the joys of wine. I also quoted a verse of the Koran, promising wine in golden cups to the blest in Paradise. "I never heard of such a text," said Ben Omar; and I rather believe he never had, for I had taken the liberty of coining it on the spot. Mine host I scarcely believe suspected my drift.

Ben Omar had been a wealthy merchant before his appointment by General Clausel to be Bey of Titeri, one of the four grand divisions of the Regency. He has travelled

through Italy and France; and at Paris he received the cross of the Legion of Honour, in reward of his services to the French. He is about forty-seven. His conversation, without being brilliant, is sensible; and his manners are so like those of the general gentleman of the world, that you speedily forget his wearing a turban. He told me that in his town and country house he has an establishment of eighty-four servants, and that he is besides obliged to give hospitable meals, of bread and chopped mutton preserved in grease, to about five hundred Moorish rustics, whenever any of them choose to come to town. He spoke to me feelingly of the miseries which Algiers had suffered under the government of the Turks; and the greatest sufferer, he said, of the Mussulman population was the Dey himself. Even the last and most fortunate of all the Deys, Hussein Pasha, lived but as a prisoner in his own palace at the Kassaba

for some twelve years. He durst not sleep nor stir out of it, and he never left it till the French dethroned him.

On the roadside, as you go out by Bab-el-Oued, there are the tombs of six Deys who were all successively elected and beheaded on the same day. "Why did they compete," I said, "for a throne which was so precarious?" He answered me—"They did not compete. When the janissaries elected a Turk to wear the caftan, he durst not refuse it. I would rather have been the lowest shopkeeper in Paris than the Dey of Algiers." After six Deys had been beheaded in the course of twenty-four hours —each a few hours after his election—the janissaries, tired of fighting, agreed to choose for Dey the first man whom they should meet entering the gate of Babazoun. That man happened to be a poor cobbler, who in vain protested against the cruelty of making him exchange his apron for a caftan, and

his awl for a sceptre. He could find no shift to evade the fatal shift, but was uncobblered and made a king, and bade adieu to his *last* vocation. Tradition says that he made an admirably good king, and reigned in the hearts of his people after he had ceased to patch their *soles*.

In talking about the Turks, I told him an anecdote of one of the most distinguished Algerine Turks, who came over to London and waited on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Bathurst, who received him, of course, with due respect. But his Algerine Excellency thought that etiquette required him also to pay his respects the next day to Lord Bathurst's cook. He was shown into a lower saloon, and cookey was brought thither with his apron before him, and his shirt sleeves tucked up. Panic-struck was the lord of the frying-pan, as he gaped at the salaam of his Oriental visitor; and he ran back to

his kitchen in *a stew* of astonishment. "Ay," said Ben Omar, "the simple Turk thought that your manners were like those of Algiers.

"*Here* it was necessary for the Dey's cook to be his confidential friend, for a little mistake in his cookery might have affected his Highness's stomach to a degree that would have created the necessity for a new election. Thus the cook was a high dignitary at the Court of Algiers; and for that matter, so was the hangman—a very great officer indeed, scarcely inferior to the Hasnagee, or Prime Minister." At parting, the Moor shook me cordially by the hand, and requested me to come to see him at his country-house. "Have you any beech-trees on your estate?" I asked him. "Oh, yes, plenty." "Then you will receive me under one of them." As we were going home, one of the lean Frenchmen inquired what possible curiosity I could have about

the beech-trees on the ex-Bey's estate? "My motive," I replied, "was simply to ascertain whether I could, with a safe conscience, address him in the words,—

'Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi.'"

LETTER X.

Tribunal of Commerce — Comparison of British and French Settlements—General Clausel—Duke of Rovigo — Massacre of an Arab Tribe—Dispensing of Justice—Punishments—French Tribunal—An Elopement—Description of a Cadi—A Case decided before him.

I WENT yesterday with Mr. St. John to witness the ceremony of opening the Tribunal of Commerce, of which Mons. La Croutz, I understand, is to be President; but at this initiatory meeting the Procureur de Roi took the chair. The object of this institution is to relieve the high Justiciary Court of Algiers of cases which are purely commercial; and it is thought that the decisions of the new Board will be disembarrassed of many legal delays that are inseparable from other jurisdictions.

The ceremony on this occasion was imposing. The principal staff-officers of the army were seated on one side of the hall, and the foreign consuls, the Jewish Rabbins, and the chiefs of the Moors and Arabs, on the other. I sat beside the British consul.

This subject reminds me that I have yet to answer some of your questions respecting the laws and government of this country, since it came under French domination. I need not tell you that the settlers are too small and heterogeneous a body to claim a self-elected legislative representation; and it will probably be a long time before the colony will be strong enough to demand a constitution. But I do think that it would be politic in France to grant them that boon, as soon as the number of settlers amounts to a few thousands. At present, I believe, their families can only be counted by hundreds. My zeal I avow

to you is enlisted in the cause of French colonization; and I wish the French to colonize, as the English were wont to do *of old;* I say *of old,* because our colonial policy has evidently taken a less liberal turn since the war of American Independence. Moreover, I must speak on this subject *in general terms,* without digressing into special exceptions.

Generally speaking, our colonies have possessed constitutions; and to that circumstance, still more than to our naval power, I attribute our colonial superiority. Compare the history of British and French foreign settlements, and you will find that the former, upon the whole, have been more or less *successful,* and the latter more or less *unsuccessful.* What has given us the advantage?—In my opinion, it has been our having granted to our settlers, for the most part, free institutions and elective representation. Then it was that the States

of North America acquired their energy. On the character of those puissant daughters, England had stamped an image of herself—a sovereign of the world. They threw off, you will tell me, the parent yoke; ay—but what right had the parent to impose a yoke? The very resistance of those children proved that they were our legitimate children—and not our bastards. Besides, consider—before we drove them into self-emancipation, what gallant and loyal, because free, colonists we had in these North Americans! Remember the figure they made when brought into direct hostility with the colonists of France.

In 1745, the British colonial militia stormed the French fortress of Louisbourg, which had cost France 30,000,000 livres; and thus struck the first decisive blow at her North American possessions. Had the French colonists in Canada been equal in condition, and therefore in character, to

those of England, Wolfe would have attacked Quebec in vain. Few things have been more remarkable than the superiority of the British *provincials* over the Canadian *Milice*. Each body was composed of colonists; but the English were *freeholders*, and therefore acted with a self-dependance and vigour which the French retainers of a degenerate noblesse were incapable of emulating. In the meantime, the European settlers here continue to be governed by French law modified by military government: for the decrees of the Governor-general have the force of laws. This military government, however, has two important checks: one of them is an express understanding that the Governor's decrees shall make no departure from the French code, except in cases of palpable and peculiar necessity. The other is, his responsibility to higher authorities at Paris, whose letters can reach him in a week.

From the date of the conquest of Algiers, in June, 1830, to that of the recall of General Bourmont, in the September following, there could hardly be said to be an organized government in the country. At the latter period, General Clausel arrived, and his administration had at least the merit of being energetic and systematic. He formed the different functionaries into a council of government, which he subdivided into three departments of finance, justice, and the management of the interior. To be sure, there is no defending some of Clausel's proceedings at Algiers, such as his treatment of the Turks, and his confiscations of both religious and civil property; but still his government was firm and without conflict. Not so was that of his successor, Berthezène. They say he was well-intentioned, but he was either very unfortunate, or wanted force of character. The expeditions into the interior which he

got up, always ended in the French retreating faster from the interior than they had marched into it.

Next, at the end of 1831, came out as governor the Duke of Rovigo; and, in a month after him, the Baron de Pichon, as *Intendant Civile*. By a decree which the French government issued out that year, it was clearly their intention to have divided the civil and military management of the colony; but Pichon found his authority nullified by the imperious Rovigo, and he was not supported by the authorities at home. Rovigo's government was always active, and in some points commendable. In 1832, he had to combat the most critical circumstances of the colony. There were actually five thousand French soldiers sick in the hospitals. He had to defend the cantonments, to protect the settlers, and, at the same time, to sally forth against the insurgent natives, who were looking in almost

at the gates of Algiers, and whitening its precincts with their bernouses. In this emergency, he appealed to the French inhabitants of the capital, and in three days a national guard was organized and armed. During a month, it garrisoned the city, maintained public order, and allowed the regular troops to go out and fight the enemy.

But in Rovigo's administration there are circumstances of much less agreeable recollection. The massacre of the Arab tribe of El Offias was a hideous business, which, if he did not authorize, he at least never either investigated or punished; and the subsequent execution of two Arab chiefs, who came, relying on the faith of nations, to negotiate a peace between their own people and the French, was a foul act of murder. Their heads were struck off and publicly exhibited in Algiers. These are

ugly affairs; but let Englishmen look to the south as well as to the north of Africa.

I come now to the dispensation of justice among the natives. Before the conquest, it was dispensed by the Cadi, a religious man, educated in the mosque, and belonging to the class of the doctors of law. To these doctors of law, with the Mufti at their head, there was sometimes an appeal from the Cadi's jurisdiction; and there was also a right of referring any sentence to the Dey—but the latter kind of appeal had become almost obsolete. Every city and large village had its Cadi recognised by the Dey, as far as the sabre of his military power extended. The more remote Arabs had their Sheiks, who, in lieu of the Cadis, exercised a fatherly power, which enabled them in their kindness even to take off people's heads. Besides the Cadis, there were Amins, or Deacons of Corporations,

who could flog, amputate, and inflict punishments short of death; and several of these Deacons of Corporations, I am told, are still authorized by the French, in order to console the natives with shows of the bastinado.

The ordinary forms of administering justice among the Moors were very simple. In civil matters the complainant, whether resident or a stranger, challenged his adversary to follow him instantly before the Cadi, whose tribunal was open from morning till night. If the defendant refused to appear, the Cadi, on application, sent his Tchaouz to seize him. The Tchaouzes were the ushers of his court, and the executors of his orders. When the defendant was brought before the judge, if it was found that he had wilfully attempted to escape from justice, he had a good chance of receiving the bastinado by way of an overture to his trial. He was called upon in

the presence of his prosecutor to confess or deny the charge against him. If he was cast, and if it was a matter of debt, respecting the payment of which the culprit pleaded his incapacity, a cudgel was applied to the soles of his feet, and the strokes of it had a wonderful efficacy, not only in restoring to the creditor recollections of his own solvency, but in producing a frank avowal of his sentiments before the court.

In cases of theft, the Algerines, like all other Mahometans, used to cut off the hands of the light-fingered gentry. I was besought for charity the other day by a thief, who had had his hand cut off by the executioner thirteen years ago. It was evident, in the operation, that the sawed bone had never been covered by the skin, and, horrible to relate, I thought I could discern even the dried-up marrow. The beggar, by way of exciting my tenderness, thrust the stump almost under my nose.

About political and military crimes, alleged or real, the Cadi had no occasion to exert himself. Culprits of this sort were brought before the Dey and his officers, who simply troubled them with a few questions, the answers to which were elicited by physical torture, after which they dispatched them.

The husband who could prove his wife's infidelity had a right, by the law of the Koran, to starve her to death: in point of fact, however, she was oftener sewed up in a sack and drowned. Yet, even in cases of adultery, pecuniary compromises were not unknown.

When any of the Jews had a dispute with a Mussulman, the case was submitted to a Mussulman Cadi; but, for misdemeanours among themselves, they were amenable to their own Rabbins and to an officer denominated their King. This office was always purchased from the Dey by some

rich member of the Jewish community. It gave the right of levying certain taxes, out of which his Judaic Majesty was supposed to reserve a profit. The French have allowed it still to subsist. The Rabbinic Judges had the same powers with those of the Cadi in matters both civil and criminal, and they had at their disposition a special executive force.

The contempt of the Turks for the Jews drew forth a sort of toleration from their carelessness; at the same time, this contempt was not the only guarantee which the Hebrews had for their independent judicature. The Prophet has, in some sort, prescribed respect for the Law of Moses. The Koran further says, respecting Christians, "Let them be judged according to the Evangelists." By appealing to this text a Christian, with no great difficulty, obtained on the Mussulman soil the delegated protection of his own sovereign in the

person of the resident consul, except in alleged offences against the religion or government of the country, nor even in those cases was a consul's interference always prohibited.

Respecting the French tribunals, I could easily copy an account of them from the documents of the last year, 1833; but this year M. Laurence has arrived, commissioned, in conjunction with other authorities, to make very material alterations in the whole justiciary system. Matters are thus in a state of transition, the details of which are complicated, and, from all that I can learn, not yet finally arranged; so I will keep aloof from a subject which I could attempt but imperfectly to explain. As far as I can form any judgment of the change which is at present in operation, it will tend to establish harmony between the French and Mahometan law; but it will continue, I should think, to maintain that

ascendency which the French code and courts of justice have assumed over those of the natives. With no great right to hazard an opinion, I should imagine this to be desirable. Mussulman justice is simple in its forms; but it is also slovenly, and its judgments are rarely if ever written.

Algerines have complained to me of the French having broken faith in at all interfering with their right to be governed by their own laws; but there was no article to this effect in the capitulation of Algiers, and it was better that there should not. Generally speaking, there is little interference on the part of the French with the decisions of Mussulman or Rabbinic judges, in cases between natives; only that no capital punishment can be inflicted without the authority of the colonial government. Some of the Moors, they say, are sorry for this, and would still prefer drowning faithless wives: indeed, if French scandal can

be believed, domestic executions of that sort have actually taken place, though I doubt the fact. Apropos, a case occurred lately which produced a great sensation.

A Moorish woman eloped with a French officer; her husband reclaimed her, and the Cadi would have restored her to him, but she complained to the French authorities that her husband intended to kill her, and she was allowed to remain under Christian protection. Her husband protested that he had not the slightest wish to put her to death, but only desired to have her back under his own roof, that she might be delivered of a child which he believed to be his own. When the injured Moor spoke with the French lawyer on the subject, and was asked if he meant to take back the frail one to his arms, he answered indignantly, "No! When the lion approaches to an accustomed fountain and finds that the dogs have slaked their thirst

at it, he turns away from it in disdain." The decision for protecting this woman excited such a ferment among the Moors, that one of their chief Cadis resigned his office.

Inclined as I am to believe that the growing connexion between the French and the natives, and the increase of complicated social relations arising from thence betwen them, will require a more artificial system of jurisprudence, I cannot say that what I have seen of a Moorish court of justice failed to impress me with respect. In that which I visited, the Cadi was seated on a dais, with an assessor on each side of him; texts of the Koran were written on the wall behind him, and before him was a manuscript copy of the holy book. He was a mild-looking elderly man, perhaps sixty or less. I admired the patience and pains which he evidently took to investigate the case, the anxiety with which he

seemed to consult his assessors, and the amicable tone in which he spoke to the parties and witnesses. There was nothing of the Justice Shallow about him. The parties pleaded for themselves; indeed, the woman needed no advocate: they were furiously hostile; and yet, strange to say, they were not man and wife. It was a case of alleged cheatery to the amount of eighty francs. The male, the defendant, deposited his shoes at the door before entering the the court; he was a great lout, and I believe a rogue, for, without understanding Arabic, I could perceive that he stammered and was confounded on being questioned. His female accuser, according to the ungallant custom of the country, was not admitted into the court, but delivered her pleading from behind a window that was grated with iron bars: she unveiled herself, and with a slender shrivelled neck, fiery black eyes, and a shrill voice, pre-

sented the resemblance of an unfledged sparrow-hawk. She had a tongue, as the Irishman said of his wife, that would bother a rookery, and so by her glibness, and a good cause, she overcame her antagonist.

LETTER XI.

The "Moniteur Algerien"—Moorish Chronicles—Algerine Literature—Popular Songs—Anecdote of Canning—Modes of Courtship—Anecdote of Hussein Pasha—An Algerine Poem: "*Dialogue between the Wine and the Wax-candle*"—Moorish Schools—"*The Mirror of Algiers*," an Historical Work by a Moorish Algerine—An effusion of the modern Algerine Muse by a native poet.

ALL the Algerines, Jews included, speak a Patois dialect of Arabic, though they affect to write the language purely in studied compositions. Before the conquest, a printing-press was unknown in Algiers: about two years ago the French established the "Moniteur Algerien," which they promised should be written both in their own language and in that of the natives; but this paper is a mere government gazette, with only a few Arabic

words for a motto, and is in no way calculated to enlighten Africa.

Leweson, who wrote about Africa some sixty years ago, says that it was then rare to meet with a *reading* Moor; if you did, his library consisted at most of the Koran, and some commentaries upon it, with a couple of prayer-books and some old Moorish chronicles: the last of these lucubrations, the chronicles, he describes in the most contemptuous terms. They are prolix, he says, and stuffed with the marvellous—more stupid even than the works of our monkish chroniclers. Notwithstanding all this, I wish I understood Arabic, and were young enough to sit down to study those Moorish chronicles. None of them, I understand, go farther back than the times of Barbarossa and his brother: those adventurers are the pet heroes of Algerine romance.

Hearing, however, that there was such

a thing as modern Algerine literature, I applied for information to the Professor who is appointed by the French government to teach Arabic here. He is an Egyptian, and his name, by a singular conjunction of the familiar and scriptural, is Johnny Pharaoh; but he is a worthy Johnny, and not in the least like his namesake of Red Sea memory. When I asked him, if he could help me to any modern Arabic poetry that had been written in or about Algiers—"Modern Arabic poetry!" he exclaimed; "why, there is no more a poet on the face of the earth." Hem, I thought, Johnny, your truth is more plain than pleasant. "But, let me see," he continued, "perhaps there may be some slight exception to the general barrenness of modern poetry in a few of the popular songs, which are clever, but licentious." "That will not do for me," I replied; "you must help me to something *warranted moral.*"

'Oh, then, you must have something *warranted dull.*" Well, home his translations came to me, and sure enough, no fault of his, for I know he translated them faithfully, they were somniferously dull.

Canning was once asked by an English clergyman how he had liked the sermon he had preached before him. "Why, it was a short sermon," quoth Canning. "Oh! yes," said the preacher, "you know I avoid being tedious." "Ah! but," replied Canning, "you *were* tedious." In like manner, though those translated sonnets were but six in number, I thought them as wearisome as if I had clambered through a hundred. The poetaster concludes by saying, "Write on my tomb that I have been murdered by my black-eyed Gazelle." "And she served you right, you caterwauler," I responded.

The popular songs of Algiers are by all accounts very gross. Those sonnets which

my friend Pharaoh translated for me in one respect are tolerable, that they are modest, and express, however monotonously, the feeling of sentimental love. How such a feeling can exist among the Moors is to me surprising. From all that I can learn of their domestic manners, that pure but free intercourse between the sexes, which is the prelude to our courtships, which ripens acquaintance into friendship, and refines sensation into sentiment, cannot be known among this people.

When a man wishes to have a handsome wife and the daughter of a respectable family, he either bribes one of her negresses, or hires some female merchant of trinkets and millinery, not to carry her a love-letter, but to give him a true and faithful description of her person, eyes, stature, complexion, features, &c. Now, in the true and faithful report which he receives there is always some chance of the por-

traiture being flattered, for his informants will very naturally convey a hint of their commission to the marriageable lady, and, like the judges of Russia, be apt to take a bribe on both sides. The zealous match-makers will, therefore, act up to Lord Bacon's definition of poetry, and *accommodate the shows of things to the wishes of the mind.*

Thus, the lover, with dreams of beauty in his heart, may find himself betrothed one fine morning to a hag or a dowdy; and when her veil is lifted, the Lord have mercy upon him! How blessedly different is the matter with us: we deny our devotion even to personal beauty, when the soul's free and good will is not fascinated. Nevertheless, I cannot help suspecting that there are stolen means of courtship between the young Moors and Mooresses more than are commonly avowed in the description of their manners. By the way, it was no bad

trait in the character of the last Dey of Algiers, Hussein Pasha, that he had affection enough for his daughter to wish her to marry a husband of her own choice. To be sure the proceeding was not quite in our style of romance. He took her to a window under which he had brought together some of the best-looking men of Algiers, and he bade her make her election. She chose—ah! sinking of poetry!—a handsome youth, whose vocation was that of a wrestler. And yet, after all, has not Shakspeare made Rosalind fall in love with Orlando from seeing him wrestle? The anecdote at least proves that a woman's free will in matrimony was respected even by a Dey of Algiers.

Leweson, though he was scarcely more fortunate than myself in getting translations of any interesting Algerine poetry, mentions one exception. It is a poem by a Moorish Cadi of Algiers, interspersed

with prose, and is entitled "A Dialogue between the Wine and the Wax-candle." It is remarkable that the jolly Cadi should have made wine the subject of eulogy. The scene is a nuptial chamber, where the bride and bridegroom heightened the joys of their first evening by a cup of the forbidden vintage. The poet not unnaturally figures their imaginations so exalted that they heard the wine and the wax-light speak out, and maintain a controversy about their comparative claims to the gratitude of the happy pair:—"I am a sun in their chamber," quoth the wax-light; "when heaven is dark, I bring beams to their eyes by which they can see each other's beauty."—"And I put a new life into their life, and a new soul into their soul," responds the wine. The lovers are flattered by the controversy, and encourage it; but I suppose get at last overdazzled with the eloquence of the one candidate, and overcome by the

influence of the other. There exists, I believe, a translation of this poem in German. Leweson's account of it makes me think it has a spice of originality, though, I fear, a little prurient.

On a general view of the Algerines, I should not despair of their becoming one day a literary, scientific, and highly-refined people. Our common idea of the Moors is, that they are savage and unsocial, but that is as vulgar an error as blackening the visage of Othello. They are generally courteous and intelligent. Captain Rozet affirms * that the majority of them are better educated than the majority of Frenchmen,—*i. e.*, that fewer of them are ignorant of reading and writing. It is true that their schools are not conducted on the Lancasterian system, as we were told by a would-be discoverer of mare's-nests; but

* In his "Voyage dans la Régence d'Alger."

they diffuse a pretty general education, and every Moorish boy learns to read the Koran, to write, and to cast accounts by the four first rules of arithmetic. I have already alluded to an historical work by a living Moorish Algerine, entitled "The Mirror of Algiers," which, with all its faults, is not destitute of interest.

I have obtained a French, and, I believe, a literal translation of one effusion of the modern Algerine muse, which, if not intrinsically worth much, is at least curiously interesting from the subject. It was written, I imagine, by some one of the Turks or Colouglis, whose beautiful country-seats were ravaged and confiscated by the French. If my version of it should seem to you like the unfortunate sermon, to be "*both brief and tedious*," I pray you not to mistake it for sheer prose, as you will discover rhymes if you will look out for them.

LAMENTATION FOR THE FALL OF ALGIERS.

By a Native Poet.

Algiers, once a victress and queen,
Who will bind now the wounds she deplores?
Her heart is a fountain of tears.
Oh! I'd lay down my life for the bold Algerine
Who could banish the cross from our shores,
And restore thee, my country, Algiers!

But our battle by traitors was lost,
And our bravest were blind with despair;
Like drunkards they fell heap on heap:
Hence, my reason with frenzy is cross'd,
My lips breathe but accents of care,
And my eyelids are strangers to sleep.

Destruction hangs over our town,
The Jew triumphs over our tears,
His hyena-like laugh is now free.
In the dust of defeat and disgrace trodden down,
Can I live to behold thee, Algiers!
I must leave thee, my country, and flee.

All night sorrow scorches my brow,
And the day brings no longer its sweets;
I am sentenced in exile to roam,
For the Nazarine tramples us now;
The Infidels swarm in our streets,
And our home is no longer our home.

Weep, weep, for our glory is quench'd,
Our arms and our ensigns are gone;
And the foe has his banner unroll'd
In the forts where the locks of our treasures were wrench'd.
Our eyes swam in tears to look on,
Theirs sparkled in counting our gold.

From our gardens and bow'rs we are thrust,
Asking, friendless, a morsel of bread;
And our bravest and best are undone;
Oh! would, where my forefathers sleep in the dust,
I could lay down my desolate head,
I would fly from the light of the sun!

They have hew'd down our booths and chiosques;
Nay, our women have sold them their charms!
They have fled to the spoilers' embrace:

To the pourers of wine, that demolish our mosques,
They have gone, to the Infidels' arms,
Oh! live I to tell the disgrace?

No children shall spring from our beds,
Our fruits are the spoil of the foe;
Our Patriots by lands and by seas
Are scatter'd,—Heaven's anger is over our heads!
But Alla will pity our woe;
There is mercy in all his decrees.

LETTER XII.

Report of the Cholera at Oran—General Desmichel—Resolve to stop at Algiers—Madame de Verger—Society of the French very agreeable—Ruins of a Roman City—The Rustonium of Ptolemy—Antiquities near Algiers—Mount Bouzaria—French Cabarets—Coffee Houses of the Natives—Profligacy of the Moors—Public Women—Moorish Funerals—Ceremonies over the Dead—Burial Grounds—A Highland Funeral—Epitaphs of the Moors—Graves surmounted by White Turbans.

An unpleasant report has prevailed here for several days that the cholera has come over from Europe to Oran. For that city it was my intention to have taken shipping by the first good opportunity, as travelling by land is out of the question; but I thought, in the event of the news proving true, that it would be imprudent to go out, as it were

anticipating a meeting with so redoubtable a personage as the cholera, which would be interpreting rather too strictly the medical maxim, "*venienti occurrite morbo.*" In order to ascertain what credit the rumour deserved, I called on General Voirol, and finding that he did not believe it, I requested his assistance to obtain for me a passage on board the first government steamer that might be going to Oran. "*That,*" he said, "is not so easy as it may seem, there are so many applicants for passages; however, we must see what can be done for you. Come, if you please, and dine with me to-morrow; you will meet General Desmichel, who is to embark the next day as commandant for Oran, and I hope he will be able to take you with him."

I went accordingly, and we had a very pleasant party, everybody agreeing to despise the report of the cholera having come

to Oran. General Desmichel told me he could not give me a passage unless I was invested nominally with some office in his suite. "Then, make me your Latin Secretary," I said, and it was agreed to *instanter* that I should write all the Latin letters he might have occasion to send to the Arabs. After a cheerful evening, however, I awoke to hear serious news in the morning. I called at an early hour on General Desmichel—his countenance was very serious; the intelligence of the pestilence having broken out at Oran had arrived at Algiers about midnight. "It is my duty," he said, "to go to the infected place, but if I were you I should not go." I told him that such was my resolution, not merely from apprehension of cholera, but from the fear of being shut up in Oran for an indefinite time by the embargo that would be imposed upon the place. I took leave of him with

pain, to see a brave man going off to the chance of an inglorious death *.

Well, but the cholera at Oran is but a prelude to its being at Algiers, and Heaven knows how soon that itinerant performer may be leading the dance of death amongst our alleys of darkness and dense population! His revels here will be frightful; shall I fly from the infection and return to Europe? Nay—no, I thought, in communing with myself; curiosity brought me hither, and fear shall not drive me hence, with my curiosity balked. In this mind, I called at the house of the Intendant-Civile, the Baron Bondurant, and found his lady in her drawing-room, surrounded by all the world. She showed her friendly interest in me, by inquiring what were my intentions as to remaining at Algiers?

* The General looked as if he had anticipated calamity, and one of his family, I believe his nephew, was carried off by the malady.

I told her I meant to stop; but instead of complimenting my courage, as I expected, she replied, "*You are a perfect madman.* As for me, I must remain, as in duty bound, by my sick husband, but if you have a grain of sense left, get off immediately to Marseilles." Hem, I thought, you are perhaps in the right.

After her lecture, I turned round to Madame de Verger, the wittiest and the most musical of Frenchwomen. "And what do you think of me, Madame de Verger?" "I think," she said, "that you are a poltroon." "Why so?" "Because you did not go to Oran. Oh, how I admired your '*beau courage*' when we dined at General Voirol's, but where is it all now?" She added, with laughing compassion, "Pray take Madame B.'s advice, and get over to Marseilles." If Jem Smith had seen me under her quizzing, he would have said that I looked more like a *Sheepio* than a

Leo Africanus. I said, "Ladies, you are really too hard upon me, but I am neither a madman nor a coward—I belong to the *juste-milieu*."

To be serious, I am not insensible to the danger of remaining here; but it provokes me to think of having come so far, and of going away after seeing so little, and thus my crossness performs the part of courage; so I shall stop here, waiting for a chance of visiting other parts of the Regency. Boujiah and Bona, on the sea-coast, I am sorry to say, are the only accessible places at present, and into the interior there is, alas, no hope of safely penetrating beyond twenty miles from Algiers; for though the French once took possession of Belida, Coleah, and Medea, they were obliged to quit them, after learning from the natives some hard lessons in the tactics of retreat.

I find the society of the French very agreeable; but it would be more so if they

would not so constantly and ignorantly boast of their resemblance to the Romans. For the present, at least, nothing can be more unfortunate than this comparison, in as far as relates to Numidian colonization; both Rome and France have left ruins here, but those of France are the work of destruction, whilst the Roman ruins are vestiges of what they created. About the distance of fourteen miles from Algiers, on the side of the river Aratch, there are still visible the ruinous traces of a Roman city, which is supposed to have been the Rustonium mentioned by Ptolemy, and named Rusucrum by other geographers. Here, scarcely emerging from brushwood and brambles, there are fragments of walls, vaults, porticoes and arches, and trunks of columns, bits of Etrurian pottery, and sprinklings of mosaic pavement. There are traces also of a jetty which sheltered the shipping. To judge by its remains,

Rustonium must have been a mile in length, and about half as broad. The Emperor Claudius bestowed on it the privileges of a Roman city; but what a shadow is human existence!—the hyæna now laughs at the fallen glory of Rustonium, and the tortoise crawls over its tessellated floors.

There is a stone with a Roman inscription in Algiers itself, which I do not find mentioned either by Shaw or by any other traveller. It is a part of the outside wall of the mosque nearest to the Marine. I can make out upon it the words "Sulpicius Rufus Donum Dedit." Other letters are irretrievably obliterated; what remains, however, proves that the existing mosque was built partly with stones which had been formerly used by the Romans, and it probably stands where a Roman temple once stood.

Among the Antiquities near Algiers may

be mentioned some large unhewn stones, erected evidently by the hand of art, a few miles to the west of the city, in the direction of Sidi Ferruch. They stand by threes and fours, with a stone of equal size surmounting the rest. The French call them Druidic tombs. That these erections may be Phœnician I can imagine, though their being Druidic is a different question. I remember no mention of Druids in any ancient author, either Cæsar, Strabo, Mela, Diodorus Siculus, Tacitus, Lucan, Pliny, or Ammianus Marcellinus, which alludes to stones of this description forming their sepulchres. We have all concurrent testimonies that they performed their religious rites in the depth of groves; and cemeteries have had among all people more or less of a religious character. Around erections given out to be Druidic, both in France and Britain, we have no tradition of woods having ever existed; and if such stones

be Druidic, it is strange that there should be none in the isle of Anglesea.

It has never been more than dimly conjectured that Druidism came from Phœnicia, and it may be no more than conjecture that such stones, whether in Africa, England, and elsewhere, are of Phœnician erection. The data for reasoning are so faint and few, that although the sage in the academy can say a great deal more about the matter, he knows in reality little more than the child in the nursery. Still, if you let me choose one guess more feasible than another, I should follow the opinion of those who ascribe such monuments to the Phœnicians. Stukeley, the most rational of our old antiquaries, thinks so with regard to the piles at Stonehenge, and I have heard my friend Gwilt, the learned translator of "Vitruvius," maintain the same opinion.

From the table-land containing these

supposed Druid tombs, you may ascend in an hour's walk or ride (though a horse's footing is scarcely secure on these steep, stony pathways), to the top of Mount Bouzaria, which is 1000 feet above the level of the sea, and behind it commands a view of the Metidjah plain, as well as of the whole range of the Lesser Atlas. This bird's-eye prospect gives wings to the imagination, leading it by sea over the waves that roll to Spain and Italy, and overland to mountain-tops that overlook the path of the caravan towards the zone of our planet. It is merely a prospect, however, and not a landscape for the painter. Looking down to the Metidjah plain, I said to M. Descousses, who was riding beside me, " See, there; there are seven — eight encampments of the Arabs ;—I can spy their tents, and the smoke ascending from their fires. How I long to see them nearer! Will not you, who were a captain of Napoleon's

cavalry, accompany me down to the plain and risk a visit to them? Could we not reach them in safety?" "Ay," said Descousses, "we might reach them in safety, but our coming back is a different question."

On the summit of Mount Bouzaria, there are the ruins of two small villages containing some forty houses, out of which, however, only a dozen seemed to be inhabited. On the brow of the mountain, towards the east, a commanding military position, the French have built a large block-house, which is guarded by several pieces of cannon; the pathway back to Algiers is so precipitous and rocky, that I had serious apprehensions for my neck.

Along all the roads about Algiers the French have established cabarets, where songs reach you without, which indicate jollity within, and the soldiers sometimes circulate the bottle so quickly, as to

throw it at each other's heads. Very different from these haunts of revelry are the quiet coffee-houses of the natives, which are generally placed in some sequestered ravine, and embosomed in a grove of orange or other fruit-trees. In the porticos and orchards of these coffee-houses, the Moors of the neighbourhood will come to while away an entire day, squatted on mats of reeds, and drinking coffee or playing at draughts; you will see them also counting their beads, an act which, with the Mussulmans as with the Catholics, is supposed to be accompanied by devotion.

I was passing one of these cafés the other day in company with a French officer, who recognized and spoke to an elderly native. The Moor was resting beneath a fig-tree, with a rosary in his hand; his beard and turban white as snow, and his gravely placid countenance made him seem to me the most venerable man I had ever

seen. An interesting-looking youth sat beside him, whom I took to be his son, and I recognized in the few words that passed between them, the tones of paternal and filial kindness. When we left them, I said to the Frenchman, "How respectable are these cafés of the Moors, compared to our dramshops of Europe; their pleasures are indolent to be sure, but they are innocent. Is it not pleasant to see your temperate old friend passing the day with that boy, who seems to be his son, and the comfort of his age?" "Boy—son—bah! bah!" cried the Frenchman; "that companion of his is neither his son nor one of the male sex."

I should avoid alluding to the profligacy of the Moors, like any other impure subject, if it were not illustrative of an important moral truth. I have heard untravelled philosophers defend polygamy, as a safeguard against the grosser licentiousness

which fills our streets with degraded women: but Algiers is a proof that this is not a fact. At the occupation of the place by the French, there was found a greater number of such women than could be reckoned, in proportion to its population, in the most profligate town of Europe. The wretched females of this description were not, to be sure, so much incarcerated as the married women; but they had habitations allotted to them under the surveillance of a magistrate, called the Mezuar, who let them out to Mussulmans, and who punished them with death if they admitted Jews or Christians as their admirers.

This shows that polygamy is no antidote to profligacy; and, indeed, how can it be so! It is true that the Moors, like all frugal Mussulmans, seldom have more than one or two wives at a time, though they can easily divorce them; but can the wife

thus married for a moment imagine herself more than a mistress, or can the husband say to her, like Brutus to Portia—

> " You are my true and honourable wife,
> And dear to me as are the ruddy drops
> That visit this sad heart."

The Mezuars often treated those public women very cruelly. When the French came, it was wonderful how soon the latter learnt the politics of the day. Though shut up in their houses, they set up yells of joy at the French military music; they were thumped and threatened, but they snapped their fingers at their gaolers, and were finally emancipated.

I fear you will think me an incurious traveller, when I tell you that I have not yet seen any Moorish funeral, except that of a poor person; it is only at the interment of the better orders, that the honours paid to the dead are performed with any imposing

solemnity. But it is not so easy as you might imagine, to get admitted to such a spectacle. Since the cemetery adjacent to the gate of Babel Oued has been desecrated by the French, and its tombs destroyed, the rich have ceased to be buried in that quarter, though there is a ravine in the same direction stretching upwards to the south, and remote from the high road, where graves are still dug for the poor. There is one burial-ground, and there may be more for aught that I know, within the walls of Algiers: but the Moors who have country-houses, generally inter their friends in their vicinity. Formerly it was advisable for Christians to keep out of the way of their funerals, and they are still averse to any but the faithful being present at them. I extracted a promise from a young Moor who has been in France, and is no bigot, to help me some day to the sight of a native burial; but he has not kept his

word, probably apprehending the prejudices of his countrymen.

I understand, that the first ceremony performed over a deceased Moor or Mooress is to wash the corpse all over. Cotton steeped in camphor is then put into the mouth, ears, and nostrils; the body is dressed out in the best attire that can be found, as for a festive day, and is finally wrapped in linen. Those who can afford it, purchase linen that has come from Mecca, and is therefore supposed to be consecrated. By the time that the toilette of the corpse has been made, all the female friends of the family have assembled, and they join in a loud lamentation over the defunct. The men take no share in these howlings, and it would be thought weakness if they either sighed or wept, although their countenances often express a deeper grief than that of the noisy complainants. The dead are never kept more than twenty-

four hours, indeed sometimes for a much shorter time; so as to make it but too probable, that persons interred prematurely have often awoke in their graves only to struggle and be suffocated.

The biers of females are curtained, those of males have no covering but the shroud. Women never accompany a funeral to the grave, except in rare instances when female slaves have been emancipated by the will of the deceased. The procession is attended by an Iman or priest, and it generally stops on the way to the grave at the nearest mosque, where verses of the Koran are chanted choral-wise. At the place of rest the same chanting is repeated, at least I was told so; but I should think that a sepulchral requiem is a luxury appropriated only to the rich—for at the poor man's funeral which I witnessed, the Arabic words uttered over him were rather a growl than a chant. The corpse is laid in the

grave, resting on one side, and having the face towards Mecca: flags of slate or planks of wood are laid over it, to prevent the jackals from making a night's entertainment of it; the earth is then thrown in, and the grave is covered with turf and branches of trees, unless the family of the individual be rich, and then his tomb has marble slabs at head and foot, and a regular building over it.

The private burial-grounds of the wealthy are kept with extreme care; they are surrounded by walls mantled with ivy and vines, and the graves are shaded by palm-trees or cypresses. Often within the walls there is a covered gallery of white marble pillars, under which there are carpets spread, for those who come to mourn and pray.

The Moorish women, otherwise so closely immured, can always repair to the tombs of their relations; and those places, so

says report, are resorted to sometimes for assuaging other passions than grief. Mendicants always follow the funerals of the rich, and alms are distributed to them. Finally, the friends and relatives return home and have a social meal, with plenty of couscousou, fowls, and mutton. Your English refinement, I dare say, revolts at the idea of a feast after a funeral; but remember I am a Scotchman, and if you abuse these poor people for this custom, you will cast a reflection indirectly on the recent barbarism of my native land. Alas! I fear these Moorish festivities after burials are decency itself, compared with those which I have witnessed with my own eyes in Scotland. Not very long ago a Highland funeral, or *dredgy* as it is called, used to be followed by a regular supper to the company, and a ball,

> "Where hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
> Put life and mettle in their heels."

I have heard a young Highlander in the rank of a gentleman say, that he never spent a pleasanter day than at his grandmother's *dredgy;* for the mourners had as much whisky and dancing as they could set their faces to. At his death, the Laird of ——, in Argyleshire, left a beautiful young widow, of course inconsolable for his loss. After the burial and banquet, clansmen and clanswomen, attended by the piper and fiddler, convened for a dance in the castle-hall, resolving to mitigate their grief with the Highland fling—when unexpectedly the widow herself came in, all weeds and tears, with the tip of her nose scarcely peeping from her crape cap — and she seated herself mournfully on a bench. The gentleman who was to lead down the dance thought that he could not in good breeding ask any other lady than the mistress of the house to stand up with him, and with a deep sigh she consented. He then asked

the disconsolate woman to name the spring, *i. e.*, the tune she would wish to be played. "*Oh*," she said, "*let it be a light spring, for I have a heavy heart.*"

The epitaphs of the Moors are generally brief and simple, unlike those sepulchral rigmaroles where—

> "So very much is said,
> One-half will never be believed,
> The other never read."

Mr. Tulin, Vice-Consul, who is an excellent Arabic scholar, favoured me with the translation of two inscriptions on a tombstone within Algiers. At the head are two lines of verse on an erected slab of slate, meaning as follows :—

> "There is but one God, the Master of all things, the all-just and all-powerful.
> Mohammed is the Envoy of God, the executor of his will, and the believed."

At the feet there is another upright slab, inscribed to this effect:—

"This is the grave of the deceased,
By the charity of the Ever-living and Ever-lasting,
The Hadgee* Mobarck, son of Mohammet, son of Baset."

The graves of eminent men are surmounted by marble turbans designating their rank. When the French made their road through the great burial-place at Bab-el-Oued, they suffered the soldiers to carry off those turbans. I have just returned from an apothecary's shop where one of them stands inverted on the counter, and is used as a mortar by the man of rhubarb.

* The appellation of Hadgee is given to those who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

LETTER XIII.

The Jewish Cemetery—Visit by Moonlight—Inscriptions on the Tombs in Hebrew—Specimens Translated—Ceremonies at a Jewish Funeral—A singular Superstitious Custom—Algerine Melodies—The Chevalier Neukomm—Highland Music—Some Native Airs set to Music.

I CANNOT say that my friends, the Israelites, are so free from verbosity as the Moors in their sepulchral inscriptions; yet still I am glad that the conquerors have spared them. Farther west from Bab-el-Oued than the demolished Moorish tombs, and happily out of the line of the great road, lies the Jewish cemetery. It has neither flowers nor trees; but it is, to my taste, a picturesque and interesting place: it contains, I should think, though I cannot say I have reckoned them, hundreds of graves,

covered with large slabs of pure white marble, with the Hebrew characters beautifully engraven and coloured black, and here and there surmounted by sculptured hands, denoting the tombs of rabbis.

I need not apologize to you for my interest in the Hebrews; the very characters of their language beget reverence in my heart. Most ancient and ill-used people it is some comfort to see their ashes undisturbed in a country where they have suffered so much. I often visit this cemetery by clear moonlight, when the many tombs contrast their foreground splendidly with the blue amphitheatre of hills above; and here, as if the ground inspired my memory, I can vividly recollect the brightest passages of that prophet-poet Isaiah, who painted futurity like a present scene.

Fifteen years ago I applied, with some earnestness, to the Hebrew language; but

my knowledge of it is now so much decayed by disuse, that I could only transcribe some of the inscriptions in this cemetery, whilst imperfectly understanding them. I can make out that some of the tombs are those of martyrs who suffered for the Jewish faith, and I think it is indicated that they suffered death by fire. I got a Jew, who speaks a sort of English, to translate them for me, and he agreed with me that one of the epitaphs conveys that meaning. But the Jew's English version is scarcely more intelligible than the original Hebrew; I can perceive, however, that these epitaphs are all in verse, and even in rhyme *.

* Since returning to England, I applied to Mr. Hurwitz, Professor of Hebrew in the London University, to translate the epitaphs which I brought home, and he very kindly took the trouble to do so. He tells me that the style is modern, or corrupted, Hebrew, which has its difficulties to the best Hebrew scholar.

Neither the Moors nor Jews wear black in token of mourning for the dead; but the

I. *Epitaph on a Female.*

Call forth the lamenting women * to prepare a mourning, and to weep over the graceful and lovely lady † who was smitten with the plague in the day of anger, and descended into the lonely grave through the wrath (of God). She buried her husband after the death of her husband ‡. She was of fair form and stature,—agreeable in her deeds to those who knew her. Hannah her name was called, the consort of the Rabbi Joseph, of the family Buleis. In the month Sivan §, in the year of the creation 5517, her blameless soul ascended to the highest heaven.

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* Women whose business was to raise cries of lamentation over the dead.

† Literally, a graceful chamois or wild goat; a form of endearment among the Israelites here, however uncouth it may seem to us. It reminds me of a compliment paid to the ladies of England by a mulatto servant whom I hired at Algiers, after my faithful Kabyle left me to return to his native mountains. My mulatto—a cunning, flattering knave—had been in England, and could speak the language. "Ay, my star," he used to say, "show me de land like London for good cheese and porter. And den de English ladies—dey are all like she-goats,"—he meant Goddesses.

‡ That is, she had the two-fold calamity of being deprived of her husband and children.

§ The third month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year.

latter always attend funerals in their worst attire, to denote their grief. The Jewish

II. *On a Young Man.*

(This is) the tombstone of a lovely, upright, and worthy young man—Joseph the Levite, of blessed memory, who was slain for no crime, but in consequence of false imputations raised against him and his seven companions, who were all killed with him on the same day, on account of an unjust sentence that was pronounced against them by their enemies concerning something. May God, in his mercy, avenge them and the innocent blood which was shed in the land.

Be amazed, ye heavens, at this! How have the righteous thus ceased, and come to an untimely end! Woe to the eyes that have seen this, and woe to the ears that hear this! On the fourth day of Tammuz *, in the year of the world 5500, their souls went into the upper Paradise, where they will find rest.

III.

Crown of the Law! faithful Judge.—the crown is fallen from our heads.

Woe unto us that we have sinned!

The tombstone of the sage, the perfect, the distinguished Judge, the holy Rabbi, who was slain for the sanctification

* The fourth month of the year.

men weep plentifully at interments. The women sometimes attend them; but not

of the law *—our instructor and rabbi, Isaac. The memory of the holy and just be blessed! Learning weeps over him, and sheds the bitter tear. With wailing she reproaches reckless, faithless Time (for being) the perpetrator of a wicked deed:—"How durst thou pluck up a monument so fair? There is, indeed, a time to unroot a plant, and a time to plant it †. How shall we drink the bitter cup, or how couldst thou give it to so pious a man, whose mental taste was sweet, like honey and manna—whose extensive wisdom was as that of Asaph and Hymin ‡?"

He was renowned amongst those who possess wisdom and knowledge, filled the chair of instruction, and judged a people not forsaken §. Noble-minded, generous, and merciful, he often shed agonizing tears for his congregation, whose sorrows touched his feeling heart as if they were his own; for they (the people) had been delivered over to destruction as the destruction of Shalman. At last, the enemy spread the net for him, and smote him with the well-known scourge of his tongue, and tore his neck with the sword. Isaac, of the family of Abulchir, was his sig-

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* That is, he fell a martyr to his religion.

† This line Mr. Hurwitz thinks was introduced merely for the sake of the rhyme.

‡ Names of two celebrated Levites. 1 Chron. vi. 18.; vi. 24. Ps. lxxiii. 88.

§ Jeremiah xli. 5.

always. When they do, you may be sure their grief is not silent.

nature. On the 28th day of the month Ziv, his soul departed to enjoy the bliss which God had prepared for him.

IV.

The tombstone of the worthy, esteemed, charitable, pious, and wise Rabbi Jacob Zeror. He rested in glory in the month Nisan *, 5500.

The stone upon this grave awakens a weeping and a bitter lamentation for a man of a noble and honourable mind. How beautiful and glorious were his works! Faithful in his dealings, of the strictest integrity, a great benefactor to the poor of his congregation, a shield to his numerous offspring, the crown of a good name; treasurer, at first, to the Society (denominated) Nōs'ai Mittah †, and at last their associate; of a holy family, his good name being well known in the cities.—And, after all his endeavours in this world, there arose against him the sons of Belial, and raised a false imputation against him, for which he was condemned to die an uncommon death. At the hearing of this, the ears tingle, and the eyes that saw it weep blood. Be amazed at this, ye heavens! How they

* Name of the first month of the ecclesiastical year, corresponding with March and April.

† That is, the carriers of the bier—a society, I suppose, whose business it was to see the dead properly interred.

A discourse, long or short in proportion to the importance of the deceased, is preached at some little distance from the grave; prayers are chanted; and collec-

have shed the blood of a righteous man, on account of the wickedness and falsehood of his accusers! His bones will seek vengeance before God, who dwells on high. As for him, he is gone to Paradise, to dwell in the dew of light. May his soul be tied in the bundle of life!

V.

This stone cries as a woman that bringeth forth her first child to all that pass to and fro, saying thus:— "Alas! all ye that fear God, raise a lamentation with a bitter heart. Put on sackcloth instead of costly garments, for the death of R. Abram, of the family Leon, who was an upright and glorious man. He departed this life on the 14th of Kislav, in the year 5441, in a ruin and a burning fire."

VI.

Alas! all ye virtuous women, come to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. She was the wife of R. Abram, of the family Leon. She died in the ruin of her own house, in the year 5441, the 14th day of the month Kislav. May God, in his abundant mercy and great kindness, gather her soul in Paradise, with other righteous women!

tions are made for the poor. One extraordinary superstitious custom still remains. When a man dies, they believe that the devil stands in ambush before the house, in order to get possession of the corpse on its way to its last abode. As the rabbis, however, surround it all the way to interment, his infernal majesty is cowed by their presence; but still he follows the procession, in hopes of finding some favourable opportunity, or of slipping into the grave along with the defunct. When the body, therefore, is near the opened grave, the bearers suddenly retreat with it to a certain distance, and a rabbi attending them throws some gold pieces as far as he can in different directions. The devil, who is by this time either in the grave or near it, is tempted by his avarice to go and pick up the money; and, whilst he is thus employed, the corpse is hurried back to the tomb, and earth thrown over it. One day

that I talked about this custom to a Moor, who has a bigoted hatred of the poor Israelites, I asked him if it was not unlike a Jew to throw away his money? "Ah, yes," he said; "but it is very like a Jew to cheat the devil." In the burials of females, this scattering of money is never practised: Satan, it is alleged, has already too much trouble upon his hands to wish getting hold of a woman.

On certain days, families go out to weep over the tombs of their parents.

To start a livelier subject than tombs and epitaphs—I have transcribed for you a few Algerine melodies. I expressed to you a mean opinion of the native music; and, if you heard it fiddled and flageoleted by the minstrels here, I think you would not blame me for fastidiousness. They certainly execute their tunes like executioners. At the same time, I imagine I have undervalued the intrinsic merit of their music, from the

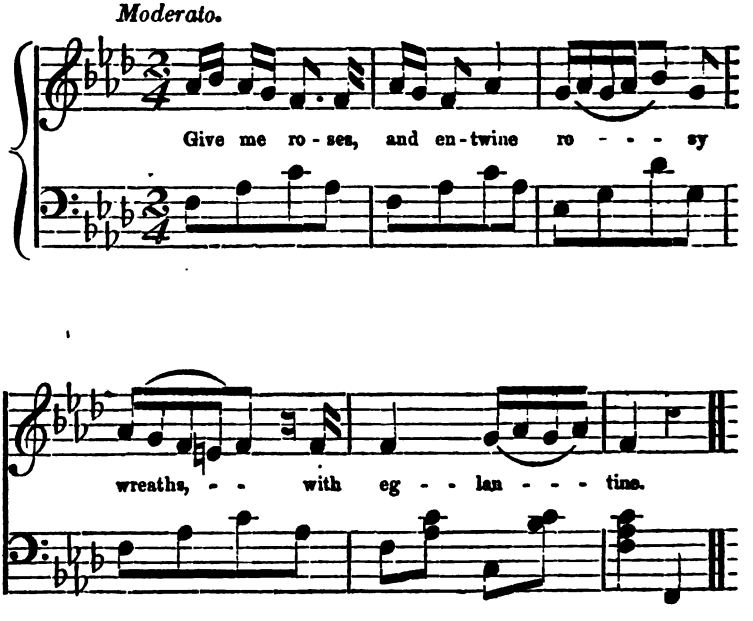
wretchedness of its performers; for incomparably better judges than myself tell me, that many of the native airs are expressive and pleasing. Madame de Verger says so, and such is the opinion also of my inspired and valued friend, the Chevalier Neukomm, whom I have met at Algiers. Of all happy incidents, that which I least expected in Africa was to meet this great man—the relation of Haydn, worthy of his relationship—the composer whose touches on the organ are poetry and religion put into sound. He has crossed the Mediterranean merely to visit his friends the De Vergers.

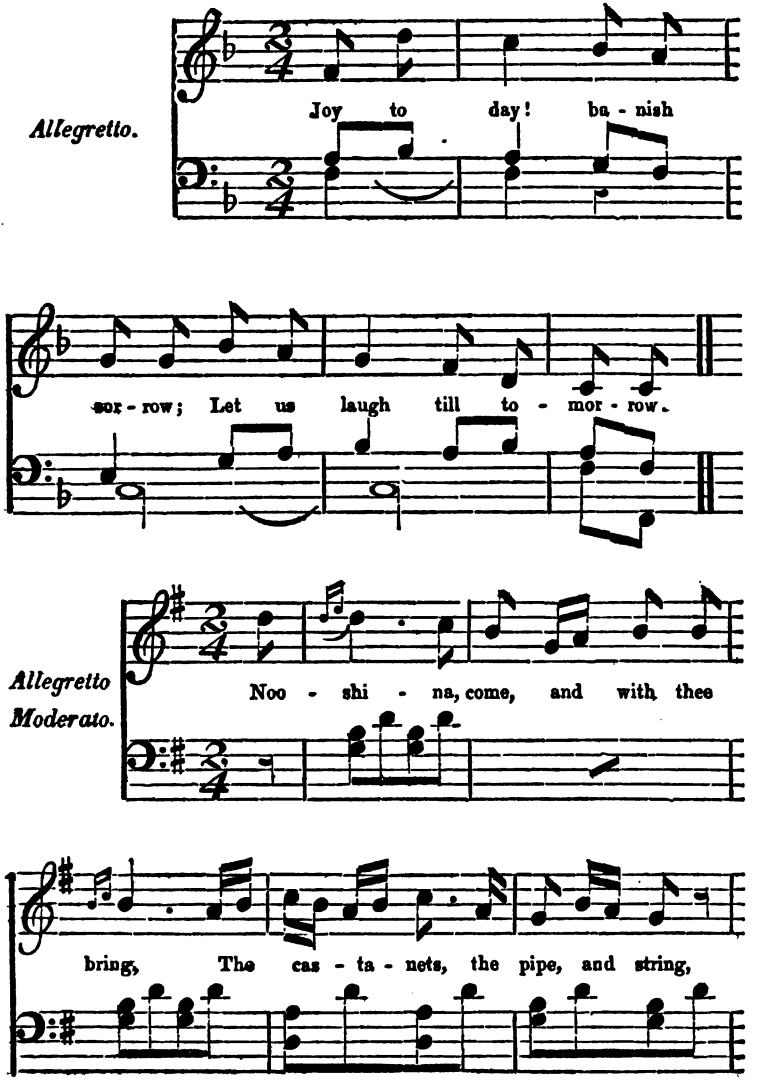
Colonel De Verger called on me the other day, bringing the Neukomm with him; I need not tell you how I greeted him—we talked about Algerine music, and he told me that he found something in it which he liked for being natural and characteristic. I said, "You surprise me, Chevalier; then I suppose you can admire even

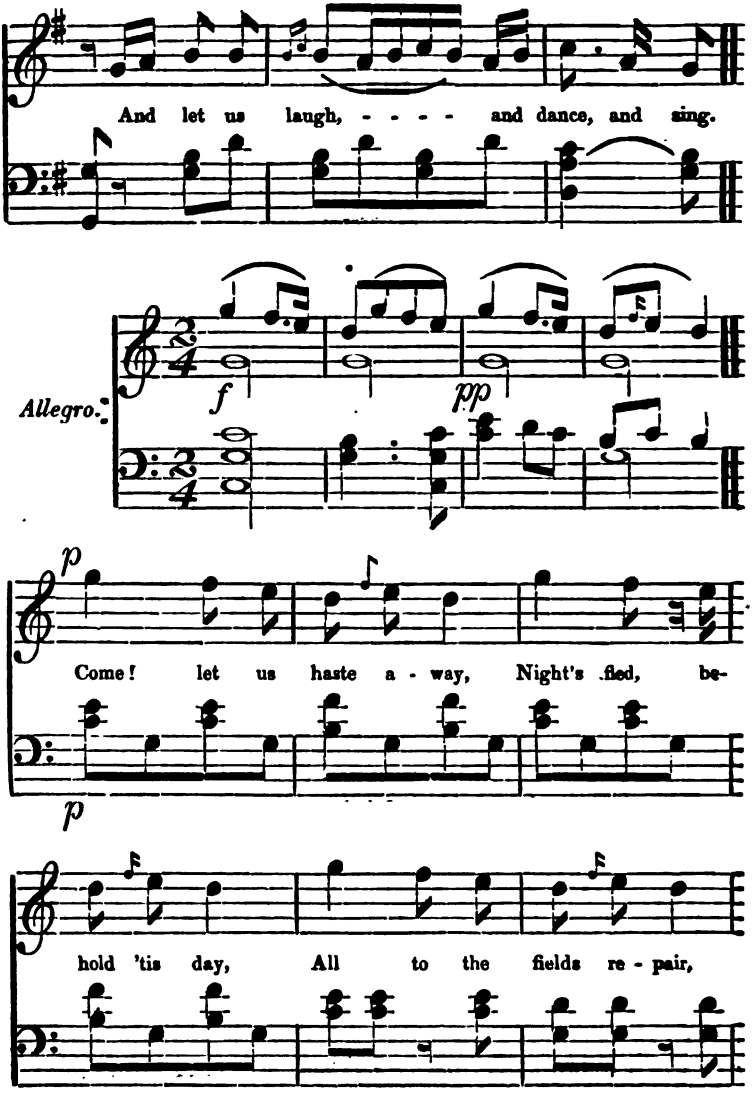
our Highland bagpipes?' "Nay," said Neukomm, "I don't despise your native pibrochs; they have in them the stirrings of rude but strong nature. When you traverse a highland glen you must not expect the breath of roses, but must be contented with the smell of heath: in like manner, even Highland music has its rude, wild charms."

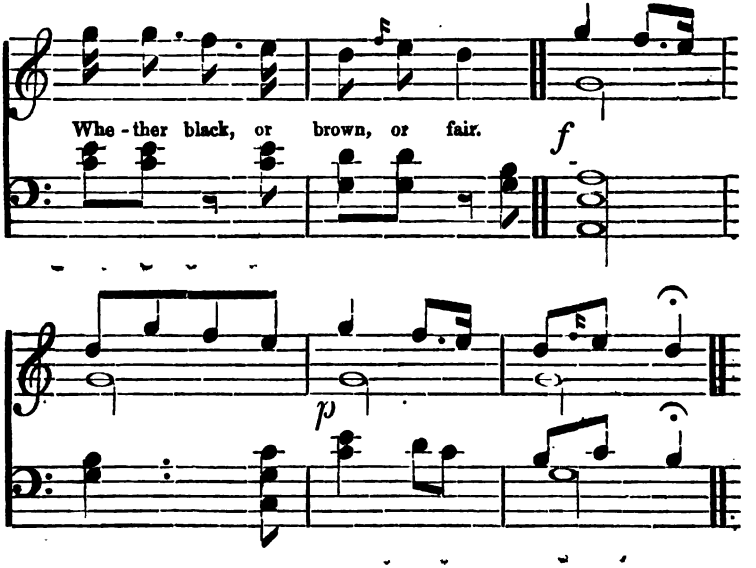
Well, upon reflection, his words seemed to confirm me in the opinion that the greatest artists are the ablest discoverers of merit, be it ever so rude and faint, in works of art. Our poets Scott and Gray, could discover genius in barbarous ballads that had eluded the obtuseness of common critics. Our sculptor, Flaxman, walked among the uncouth statuary of old English cathedrals, where defects of drawing and proportion are obvious to the eyes of a child. A surface critic would have derided those monuments; but Flaxman's eye penetrated

beyond their shape into their spirit—he divined what the sculptor had meant, and discovered tender and sublime expression. I send you a few native airs. The words are not even an attempt at poetry—but mere nonsense verses to point out the measure.

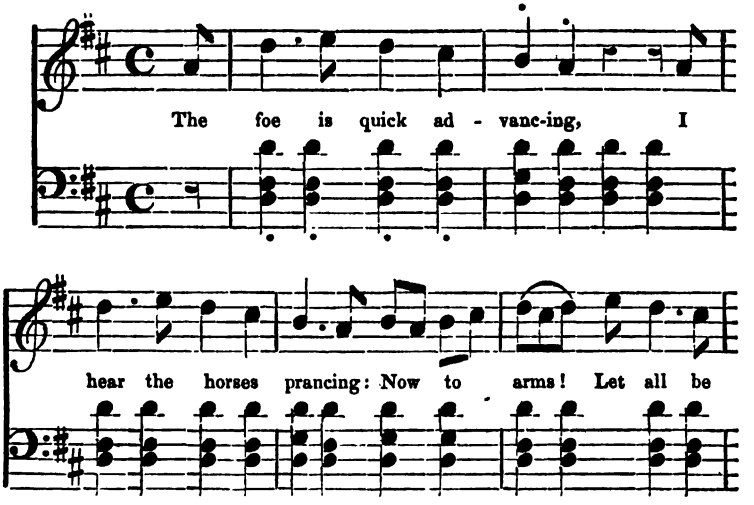


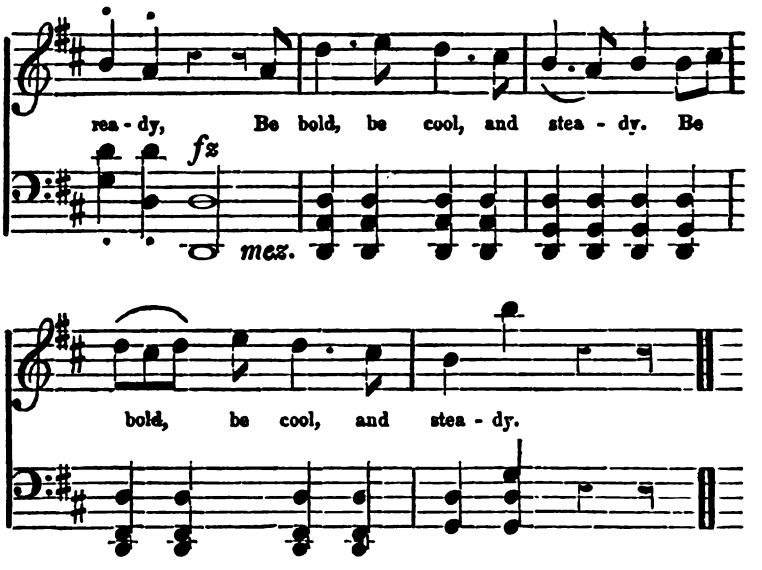

Allegretto.
Joy to day! ba - nish
sor - row; Let us laugh till to - mor - row.
Allegretto Moderato.
Noo - shi - na, come, and with thee
bring, The cas - ta - nets, the pipe, and string,


And let us laugh, - - - - and dance, and sing.
Allegro.
f
pp
p
Come! let us haste a - way, Night's fled, be-
p
hold 'tis day, All to the fields re - pair,


Whe - ther black, or brown, or fair.
f
p

MARTIAL AIR.


The foe is quick ad - vanc-ing, I
hear the horses prancing: Now to arms! Let all be



Note.—Since my return to England, I gave the above airs to a friend who is a thorough master both of the science and history of music; he has set them to European accompaniments. Though Madame De Verger had the goodness to transcribe these tunes for me, I never had the good fortune to hear her sing or play them, and could judge of them only as they were performed on the wretched native instruments. But, when my friend A—— had set a bass to them, and played them on the piano-forte, I could at once discern that they are not without beauty. They remind me of Scotch tunes, though not of those of the first order.

My friend says, in a note to me, "You must have misunderstood what Madame de Verger said about the rhythm.

Bad execution might obscure it to your ear, but it could not to hers. No. 4, however, is a little faulty, strictly speaking, in rhythm."

"The Arabians," my friend adds, "never had harmony in their music. They doubled their instruments and voices, and sang and played in octaves; but of that which constitutes the charm of modern composition, they seem to have been as ignorant as the Greeks.

"There is a remarkable resemblance between the Arabian and modern scales, and this is still more striking on examining the three Arabic characters by which each interval of the scale is marked. Their characters or symbols the Arabs called dourr mofassal, *i. e.*, pearls separated."

LETTER XIV.

Ravages of the Cholera at Oran—Weekly Fair at Bofaric—African Showers—Review of Native Cavalry—Description of the Country—Belida—Mode of Building their Houses—Retreat of the French from Belida under General Bourmont—Population—The French take it by Storm under Clausel's Government—Pillage of the Town—Misconduct of the French—Arrival at Douera—Description of an Auberge—Attacked with Pleurisy—Kindness of a French Colonel—Disturbed in my Garret by a Legion of Rats—Return to Algiers.

From Oran, we learn that the cholera has made quick work with a sixteenth part of the population, but that his ravages are on the decrease. In hopes that he will not visit Algiers during my absence, I propose very soon to take a voyage along the eastern coast, as far as Bona. In the mean time, I determined to get as far as I could into the interior, south of Algiers—if the words 'far' and 'interior' can be applied

without ridicule to the distance of twenty miles. The village of Douera, where there is a French camp of 2000 men, is fifteen miles from Algiers.

Five miles farther on, in the direction of Belida, is the plain of Boufaric, where the natives hold a weekly fair, and meet the French on terms of amity. Indeed, the French consider the tribes of that plain as their subjects, and my friend, Colonel Maret, has been appointed Aga of Boufaric; but no European ventures to the fair, except under military protection. At the weekly fair, there was to be a review of the native cavalry in the French pay, and of some battalions of French infantry. So I took the road on horseback one morning, intending, after I had seen the fair and the review, to return, ere nightfall, to Algiers. I committed a double error, however; first, in not providing against the chance of rain, and, in the next place, in choosing a com-

panion as ignorant of the country as myself, instead of riding by the side of Colonel Maret and his cavalry. These left Algiers by dawn of day, and, joined by a body of infantry at Douera, were at Boufaric long before noon.

We set off an hour later, and when we reached the camp at Douera, the French troops had left it; but my ignorant and self-sufficient comrade assured me that he knew the way to Boufaric perfectly well. He showed his knowledge of the country, however, by leading me out of the shortest way, over pathless and wild fields, in quest of Boufaric, where we wandered a long time at random till we stopped at an Arab dascra, and then a native pointed out to us the plain of the fair with his finger. In the mean time, after a beautiful morning, the clouds gathered in blackness, and it began to rain halberds, as the French say. Those African showers know nothing

of the *juste milieu;* I was soused for an hour as if under buckets, with nothing to protect me but a light great-coat, whilst my comrade sat covered with oilskins that made him water-proof from top to toe.

At last, we got a sight of the Zouaves, or Moorish horsemen, in their white bernousses, and, as the rain abated, the weather permitted them to go through some of their wonderful evolutions. They skim the plain like swallows, and they wheel, stop, and load, and fire either forwards or backwards with a dexterity which I have never seen equalled, though I have witnessed reviews of the best troops of Europe. If the French ever conquer this regency, it will be chiefly by increasing the native cavalry. A French dragoon officer tells me that he is learning the Moorish manœuvres, but for this purpose he found it necessary to procure a Moorish saddle, which, as it curves up some half a foot

both in back and front, gives the rider the longest possible command of his sword in a forward charge, and enables him to fire in retreat with a precision impracticable on a flat European saddle.

The fair at Boufaric offered no spectacle of any interest. There were some native temporary tents, at the doors of which the Kabyles and Arabs were selling all sorts of country produce, and here and there regaling themselves with coffee. Meanwhile, though with no regret, I had lost my companion, and curiosity prompted me to ride on alone in the direction of Belida. The face of the country, like all that I had seen since getting four miles beyond Algiers, is destitute of all the rich cultivation which surrounds the capital. Trees are to be met with, but not in abundance. Generally speaking, the landscape has a brown, desolate appearance, like that of the Scotch Highlands, and afar off you might think

it covered with heath. But the principal production of the soil is the dwarf palm-tree, which, though called so, has no affinity with the tree of dates, but is only a shrub: it is, however, a far richer shrub than our Highland heather: its leaves are browsed upon by cattle, and its root is eaten by the Arabs themselves.

I rode so far south as to get a very dim and distant sight of Belida. The country is wild and houseless, but I came up to a native dascra, consisting of a few miserable sheds covered with reeds, and seeing a girl milking a cow before one of them, I motioned to her in a manner so as to signify that I wanted a drink, and I held out to her a piece of silver. The little wench, however, looked very saucily at me, and with an angry wafture of her hand desired me to depart. I rode on for some time in the direction of Belida, saying to myself, 'This is really tantalizing—to be so near a ge-

nuine Moorish town, and not to get so far as even its suburbs;' but, reflecting that I could not well return to Algiers, except in European company, and feeling my curiosity damped by the wetness of my skin, I turned round, and by fast galloping reached the French troops just as the review was concluding.

Belida is situated so very near to the foot of the lesser Atlas, that when the Kabyles and Arabs forced the French out of it, their balls from the lowest fastnesses of the mountain used to reach into the middle of the town. I understand that it is surrounded by a wall of no great height, which, like all the houses, is built in what is called *pisé*, that is, of clay compacted in frames of wood; a mode of building which you often meet with in France to the south of Lyons. The houses are constructed after the general Moorish fashion, with the windows looking into an internal square

court, but scarcely any of them have more than one story. In 1825, an earthquake shook Belida, and the only houses that were spared were the lowest-roofed. Of the earthquake it cannot be said, as of Death, that he knocks with an impartial foot at the palaces of kings and the cots of paupers, for he seems to have a sworn spite at lofty architecture; accordingly, the Belidians have since omitted second stories.

In July, 1830, the people of Belida invited the French to come and defend them against the Kabyles. General Bourmont set out with twelve companies of the *élite*, and some chasseurs and artillery, and slept in the town on the night of the 23rd. But on the following day, before noon, some of his *picked* men were *picked* off by the muskets of the mountaineers, and he thought it was incumbent on him to order a general retreat. His troops set out in column

between two lines of flankers. From two o'clock till sunset, they were harassed by a force of 4000 natives, the Moors of the town having been compelled to join against them, and the natives skirmished with them in front, flank, and rear, till they halted and bivouacked a few miles beyond Boufaric, in the direction of Algiers. There they spent a hideous night amidst the cries of hyænas and jackals, and of their own wounded *.

In this retreat, the French remarked that the Moors harassed them less fiercely than the Kabyles and Arabs; and they had scarcely reached Algiers when a messenger

* There is a difference between Capt. Rozet's account of the loss of the French in this retreat, and the account of Bourmont himself. The General says, in his despatch to the Minister, Prince Polignac, that, in the whole course of the 24th, the day of retreat, there were only eight Frenchmen killed and thirty wounded, but almost all slightly. Capt. Rozet reckons the entire number *mis hors de combat* at fifty-one, of whom eleven were killed. Among the slain was Bourmont's chief aide-de-camp.

arrived from the Belidians, apologizing for their conduct, and ascribing it to compulsion. It surprises me that Captain Rozet, who is otherwise so candid as to blame the misdoings of his countrymen very freely, should inveigh against Bourmont in this instance, because he had the ill-timed clemency, "la clémence intempestive," not to have shot this messenger in front of the camp. It is an extreme case, indeed, that would justify the execution of an ambassador, and General Bourmont, in my opinion, behaved very properly. He accepted the apology, on an understanding that the people of Belida would be friendly in future to the French. I believe that the former spoke the truth in saying they had been compelled to take arms against the French.

Belida, before the earthquake, contained between 6000 and 7000 inhabitants — at present, it scarcely reckons half that number, so that the fighting men cannot ex-

ceed 500. The Bedouins were oppressing them—they prayed the French to come and protect them; expecting, of course, they would come in sufficient force: but the troops had scarcely slept and breakfasted, when they found themselves obliged to evacuate the town—the Bedouins entered, an d commanded its citizens to take arms against the Christians. What could the Belidians do? I see no proof of treachery in their conduct.

In the following year, under Clausel's government, the French, with a force of 7000 infantry, besides cavalry and artillery, took Belida by storm; and on that occasion they could not well be accused of any *ill-timed clemency*, for the pillage of the place continued an entire day, and one-half of their army having gone out to pursue the Bedouins up Mount Atlas, as well as to lay waste all their habitations with fire, the remaining battalions, suspecting that the

townsmen were plotting an insurrection, amused themselves for six hours with military executions. The night which closed on that butchery, exhibited the orange orchards and the fairest fields in the world illuminated for miles round by the conflagration of huts and houses. Really, at the hazard of appearing inconsistent, I could sometimes retract my wishes for the success of the French in Africa, when I read their own accounts of these absurd and brutal expeditions. Nobody can regret that they reaped no permanent advantage from conquests thus misused. One of their generals, indeed, congratulated his army on their glory when the fires of their bivouacs might be seen on the mountain-tops mingling their blaze with the stars of heaven. But this mock sublime ended in serious humiliation. The army of Mount Atlas returned hunted and diminished to Algiers.

Notwithstanding these reflections on the misconduct of the French, I rejoined them at Boufaric, very glad of their company, which I had all the way to Douera. By this time, the weather had changed from showers to heat and brilliance. The sun of this climate, if he hides himself for a time, bursts suddenly from his concealment, like a tyrant who is jealous that you may have forgotten him. For the present, I found no fault with the power and splendour of his solar majesty; he warmed my chill skin, and he dried my clothes till they smoked like a blanket, or flannel petticoat, fresh from a tub of hot water, that has been wrung out by the hands of some strong washerwoman, and hung up before the fire. I might have guessed that this was not a wholesome way of being dried (*si mens non læva fuisset*); but my sensations were agreeable, not to say delicious, as I wound along a sunny road, skirted with laurel-roses,

and listened to the martial music of the band.

Arrived at Douera, I felt an irresistible drowsiness come over me. My clothes, I thought to myself, are now completely dried; the dews of the night, and possibly rain, will come on before I can reach Algiers, so I will seek a lodging here. I therefore struck up along the camp to a sorry auberge which lies behind it, which has only a billiard-room on the ground floor, frequented by the French officers, and a garret aloft, with a ladder for stairs. "Can you give me a good bed, landlord?" "Yes, Sir, a very good bed." So I ascended the *gradus ad Parnassum*, but found that the *très bon lit* comprised only a paillasse and a rug; nathless, I was very weary, and I laid myself down in my clothes. In two hours, however, I awoke in great agony, feeling every act of respiration like the driving of a tenpenny nail

into my left breast; in short, I had a regular pleurisy.

I got up, and, groping my way to the trap-door, descended to the lower room, where I seated myself beside the fire. The French officers seeing me so ill, behaved very humanely. One of them went off immediately to the camp for a surgeon, and brought him. The doctor's advice that I should be bled, and put into a comfortable bed, produced a confession from the aubergiste, that my *bon lit* had no bed-clothes. On this, a French colonel (his name I am ashamed to leave a blank, for though I took it down the next day, I unfortunately lost the memorandum) sent for bed-clothes from his own tent. The kindness of this worthy man I shall never forget: his strong resemblance to my brave and gentle cousin, Captain Robert Campbell, of the Navy, now no more, heightened, though fortuitously and fancifully, my sense of his attention.

Bleeding, and a cataplasm applied to my breast, afforded me a little relief, and thus I hoped to have spent the night, if not in sleep, at least in comparative composure.

I consoled myself with thinking that, sharp as the pain was, it was not quite so hideous as I could imagine pain to be. But I was disturbed in these thankful reflections, by finding that my garret was infested by a legion of rats. Some of them, of the size of leverets, leaped upon my bed. The pleasant smell of my cataplasm had made me popular among them. "Oh!" I exclaimed, like Mrs. Beverley in the 'Gamester,' "I could support affliction if it would take any shape but this!" for my horror of rats is unspeakable; and that night passed over me "*like a phantasma or a hideous dream.*" By the efforts of my voice that brought back the tenpenny nail in its full vigour, I got the landlord to come up. "Oh, mon hôte! have you never a cat in

the house? I will give you twenty francs for her company till to-morrow." "Helas! Monsieur," he replied, "if you gave me a thousand francs I could not find you a cat; there is no keeping one in the camp of Douera!" "Why not?" "Because the French soldiers steal them?" "And what do they do with them?" "Why it is alleged that they make pies and soup of them." "Confound them, I wish these rats were down their throats: but have you no dog?" "No, Sir, none but that fierce chained mastiff who is barking in the yard, and he would be as likely to devour you as the rats." "Woe's me," I said, "then put a couple of candles at my bedside, and reach me my horsewhip." With that weapon in the hand of my arm which had not been bled I had now to defend myself; and though the effort was agonizing, I struck frequently at the intruders.

I have an indistinct recollection of seeing

and striking at one rat who was sitting on his hind legs, and whetting his teeth in the act to spring at me; but I cannot quite trust to my recollections, for I certainly became light-headed, and imagined I saw black, white, and blue rats. I nevertheless got a short morning sleep, and was well enough to receive some of the French officers who called to inquire for me. In the course of next day, I was conveyed in a carriage to Algiers, and never was I more thankful than to find myself in my bed in M. Descousse's house, and my skilful friend, Dr. Rivière, prescribing for me. He applied seventy-five leeches to my breast, and as many between my shoulders. How relative are our ideas of home! Algiers is now to me a home; I have friends here to watch me night and day, and their care has already relieved my sufferings.

LETTER XV.

Kindness of Mr. and Mrs. St. John—Story of an Irish Actor—Trip to Bona—"*Leo Africanus*"—Dellys—The Work of Leo Africanus on Africa, 1526—Dr. Shaw—Bougia—Description of the Town—Grandeur of the Mountain Scenery—Anecdote of Turner the Painter—Mr. Bransil, the English Consul—Present state of Bougia—Singular Story of General Trezel losing an eye at Waterloo—Storming of Bougia by the French—Description of the place by Leo Africanus—Present Population—Inscriptions on the Walls of the Fortress—Description of Laugier de Tassy—Native Tribes around Bougia—Products of the Country—Jigel or Gigery—Adventures of an Irish family wrecked there.

By means of leeches—the only backbiters that ever did good in this world—I got rid of my pleurisy; but it was followed by an attack of acute rheumatism, which for a time set my doctors—for I had two of them—with all their bathing, bleeding, and diète

(the last is a scientific term for starvation), at defiance. Whilst I was thus suffering, my friend our consul called on me, and insisted that I should be removed to his house, where I should find many comforts and conveniences that could not be expected in a lodging. I accepted his invitation, and experienced every possible kindness and attention under his roof.

Among the many marks of Mr. and Mrs. St. John's friendship, that which I felt as most delicately hospitable, was their sending every morning to inquire after my health—not one of their domestics, but one of their sweet little saints, who, without entering, knocked with her pretty knuckle at my chamber-door and said, "Papa and mamma have sent me to ask how you are this morning?" I felt as if there was a healing charm in the voice of the inquiring cherub. By and bye, I was able to come down and shake hands with all the family

in their breakfast-parlour. At the end of a month, I was quite recovered.

If you remember the story of an Irish actor, who advertised that having lost considerably by his last benefit he was *thereby* induced to take another, I am afraid you will compare me to that sapient personage when I tell you, that I had no sooner recovered the health I had lost in my trip to Boufaric, than I resolved on making another to Bona. That place, still remarkable for its coral fishery, is the farthest eastern town in the Algerine regency possessed by the French. I got a passage thither for myself and my servant on board the government steamer, and was happy to have for my fellow-voyager Mr. Brown, the American consul at Algiers.

Recollecting my voyage across the Mediterranean, I winced sorely at the anticipation of sea-sickness in a mid-winter sail along the coast, of two hundred miles in

going, and as many in returning. But the holy St. Austin, I verily believe, sent us propitious weather, if the saints in Heaven have anything to do with earthly weather and steam navigation. We were aboard about noon, and, though it was the 8th of January, the deck was warm with sunshine, and the sea was as smooth as glass. The motion of the vessel, far from sickening me, combined with the balmy air to exhilarate my spirits. My fancy luxuriated in comparing our vessel to the car of some ocean divinity, and I recalled the line,

"Atque rotis summas levibus perlabitur undas."

I paced the deck with no other discontentment than a longing for dinner, and sat down at times to peruse a small Elzevir copy of "Leo Africanus," which I had brought in my pocket. I find that Leo describes Algiers as having been famous even in his time for the beauty of its cir-

cumjacent villas and gardens, and the plain of the Metidja, which, by the way, was so called after the name of a Roman emperor's daughter, as remarkably fruitful. We sailed—or, I should rather say, we wheeled—too far from the coast to have a distinct view of it, but were near enough to see that it is rocky and mountainous.

Early in the day, we passed the place where the river Bouberak discharges itself into the sea, and forms a boundary between the provinces of Titeri and Constantina. About a league from thence, I could compute, though I could not discern, that we were off Dellys, a town described by Leo Africanus under the name of Tedelles. How much would I have given if I could have landed with safety for an hour or two at this interesting spot, that I might have compared Leo's account of Tedelles with its present condition; but to land at any point of the coast which the French have

not occupied would be making a voluntary sacrifice of one's life or liberty.

Leo describes Tedelles, in his own time, as a very large town surrounded with strong and high walls, and occupied by an industrious and wealthy people famous for dyeing cloth, an occupation to which their streams and fountains were favourable. Speaking as a contemporary, he adds, that the inhabitants were gay and ingenious, almost every individual being able to play on the harp and accompany it with singing. Their land, he says, is fruitful, and their dress is sumptuous. Fish, he tells us, was so plentiful, that there was no need of a fish-market, for the amateurs of fishing caught such loads that they distributed their booty gratis.

John Leo Africanus, the traveller and geographer, was a native of Granada, of Moorish extraction. When that city was taken by the arms of Ferdinand and Isa-

bella, in 1492, he retired into Africa, from which circumstance he derived his surname. He studied the Arabic language at Fez; and partly as an ambassador from the king of the country, partly for his own pleasure, he made several journeys in Europe, Lesser Asia, and Africa, of which he wrote a narrative in Arabic. Having fallen into the hands of pirates at the Isle of Zerb, he was sold to a master who presented him to Leo X. That pontiff afforded him a favourable reception on account of his learning and talents, and having persuaded him to renounce Mahometanism, gave him his own names of John and Leo at the baptismal font. He acquired the Italian language at Rome, and translated into it his work on Africa, dating it 1526. His description of Africa, though its geography has the defects of the age, is reckoned one of the most curious of early voyages and travels, and is, upon the whole, in good credit for

veracity. He had visited in person most of the places he describes.

Leo travelled in Africa early in the 16th century. Doctor Shaw, whose travels were published two hundred years afterwards, found Dellys but an insignificant place, surviving amidst the ruins of a larger ancient city, and ill supplied with water; but Leweson, half a century later, commemorates the industry of the inhabitants, and their skill in manufacturing woollen cloth. The last of these authors, however, describes a part of the population as addicted to a less laudable sort of industry. The few ships, he says, that anchor here, are exposed to the thievery of the natives, who, being expert swimmers and divers, cut the anchor ropes at night in order to occasion shipwrecks.

On the 9th of January, before daylight, we anchored off Bougia, and early in the morning I went ashore, as the steamer

always rests here for half-a-day on its way between Algiers and Bona. The harbour of this place is pretty spacious; but, like every other on the Algerine coast, it is insecure. The town itself lies on the slope of a hill considerably above the level of the sea. Its few streets—for it is now a miserable place, though once of better account—are steep and tortuous, but not so narrow as those of Algiers. Poor as it is, it commands a glorious view of land and water; and even a portion of its own ruins is picturesque.

The remains of a shapely arch on the sea-shore, which I imagine to have been of Roman construction—though it is covered with brushwood—struck me as a beautiful object. But, such is the grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery, that I drop my pen in despair of giving you any conception of it. Scotchman as I am, and much as I love my native land, I declare to

you that I felt as if I had never before seen the full glory of mountain scenery. The African Highlands spring up to the sight not only with a sterner boldness than our own, but they borrow colours from the sun unknown to our climate, and they are mantled in clouds of richer dye. The farthest-off summits appeared in their snow, like the turbans of gigantic Moors, whilst the nearer masses glowed in crimson and gold under the light of morning. "Would that I had here," I exclaimed, "one of our own true British artists!"—for we alone have landscape painters. What would not Turner make of this scene, whilst I am vainly shedding ink to portray it! *Apropos* to Turner, I can give you an instance of his ready wit. Once at a dinner, where several artists, amateurs, and literary men were convened, a poet, not unknown to you, by the way of being very facetious, proposed as a toast the health of the *paint-*

ers and glaziers of Great Britain. The toast was drank, and Turner, after returning thanks for it, proposed the health of the British *paper-stainers*. I am afraid if Turner saw these mountains, and any attempt of mine to describe them, he would set me down as a paper-stainer.

I spent an hour in contemplating this splendid picture and colossal sculpturing by the hand of Nature. The wildness of the scene is not unsoftened by traits of repose. The sea was like a mirror to its surrounding rocks, as well as to its ships at anchor in the quiet bay. On the slope of the opposite mountains, you can see some native villages, where——

"Summa procul villarum culmina fumant;"

and here and there a white maraboot shows its head. To the right of the city, as you look over the harbour, a valley of some breadth extends, through which the river

Mansourah * discharges itself into the sea; and from this valley the lowing of the Kabyle cattle may be heard.

After a morning stroll, I met my friend Brown, and we called together on the English consul of the place, a Mr. Bransil. He gave us an excellent *déjeûner à la fourchette.* Mr. Bransil is a Swede—a well-educated man, deserving a better residence than this barbarous nook of the world. His abode, which has nothing to recommend it but a little orangery in front of it, and a fine view of the country, costs him twice the rent that it would fetch in London. It consists of a court, flanked on three sides by as many hovels, each inferior in architecture to a respectable English cow-house. He has fitted up the interior, however, with tasteful neatness. Distance from home makes people familiar on short acquaintance. The books on his

* The same river which Shaw calls Summam.

shelves denoted a man of elegant reading, and his conversation showed that he had moved in good society.

I could not help saying to Mr. Bransil, "You must find this place a dreary sort of *séjour?*"

"Dreary enough, God knows!" he answered, with an affirmative sigh.

"Pray, how do you kill the time?"

"I don't kill it—it kills me."

"Have you any society?"

"Um—O yes!—A few French serjeants and corporals, and now and then an enlightened skipper of a trading vessel."

"Pleasant enough: and then for your salary?"

"I have no salary."

"But surely there are perquisites?"

"Next to none!"

"How the devil then do you remain in this horrid consulship?"

"Why, I don't mean to remain long,

and I believe I shall scarcely find a successor."

Bougia is at present little better than a mass of ruins, and among its houses there are still marks of the carnage that attended its last siege about a year and a half ago. Mr. Bransil's house, which, bad as it is, was the abode of the Sheik of Bougia, has a window at which an unfortunate native was either firing, or endeavouring to make his escape, when a French ball dispatched him, and left traces of his blood, which are still uneffaced. Bougia was taken in 1833, by the active and intrepid General Trezel. I made acquaintance with this officer at Algiers, where he is next in command to Count D'Erlon.

In my walk around the town I fell in with a French soldier, to whom I put some questions about the siege, as he told me he was one of the four thousand men who

stormed the place under the command of Trezel.

"I know the General," I said.

'Then you know," replied the soldier, "as brave a little man as ever drew sword for his country."

"I believe you," I said; "I am pleased with your enthusiasm. Trezel has lost an eye in the service of his country, but in the other there is as much intelligence as would serve a dozen common countenances."

"Vous avez raison, Monsieur," quoth the *militaire;* "and I can tell you a singular story about the manner of his losing that eye. In the battle of Waterloo he was charging at the head of his regiment, when a musket-ball, which was supposed to have rebounded from a tree, struck out one of his eyes. Search was made for the ball, to ascertain whether it had entered into the head or not, but it could nowhere

be found. The wound was dressed and externally healed, but still the General felt a weight in the inside of his head, and for a couple of years suffered considerable pain. At last the ball forced its way down to the respiratory duct, between the nose and the mouth, and was extracted from the roof of the mouth."

I give you this story as the soldier told it to me. If it be true, it is an extraordinary case in surgery. Our friend, the Scott of Bromley, will tell you if can be true.*

"It was a bloody day," continued my informant, "that of our storming Bougia. The little General was never more put to it in his life, nor made greater personal exertions. He had recently been wounded in

* Delicacy subsequently prevented me from asking General Trezel himself as to the fact, but one of his aides-de-camp told me he fully believed the account; and on consulting Sir Charles Bell, only yesterday, he said, "The case is to me neither new nor surprising."

the leg, and the surgeon told him that if he exerted the limb, it would infallibly gangrene. Nevertheless, as there was fighting from street to street, he was obliged to exert himself, let the consequences be what they might. In charging the Kabyles up the main street, he saw many of his soldiers slinking into the recesses of doors, in order to avoid the bullets that were showering down upon them. Both he and his aide-de-camp dismounted from their horses, and taking each a side of the street, went along," to use my informant's phrase, " spooning the skulkers with their sabres out of the doors."

The town has still two small forts to defend the harbour, and a third on the summit of a mountain behind it, which is two thousand and eleven feet above the level of the sea. After breakfast, we made a party on foot to this mountain stronghold, and reaching it after a zigzag ascent,

which took us three hours, we sat down to a cold pic-nic collation, in a still colder atmosphere, where we found the barometer two degrees lower than in the town. But we procured some cognac, that made us independent of the barometer.

The description of the place by Leo Africanus corresponds very ill with its present condition. "Bougia," he says, "is a very ancient city, which, as some will have it, was founded by the Romans. It is surrounded by very high walls, in the most elegant style of ancient fortification. It is built on the side of a very high mountain looking towards the Mediterranean. That part of it which is now inhabited numbers more than eight thousand families; but if all parts were built upon, it might contain twenty-six thousand houses; for it is of almost incredible length."

From this it appears that in Leo's time the population of Bougia was probably

thirty thousand souls, and it is possible that it may have once amounted to above one hundred thousand. At present, exclusive of the French garrison, I do not believe it contains five hundred persons; for, by the report of M. Genty de Bussy, the population of Bougia in November, 1833, was as follows:—After the occupation of the place by the French, there remained in it fifty-six individuals—men, women, and children; the inhabitants who had fled, but returned after the siege, were nineteen; the Bougiotes who were in Algiers at the time of the expedition, but who returned afterwards, were forty-four; the native guides of the French army, and the other native Africans who settled in the place, amounted to fifteen; making a total of one hundred and thirty-four.

Leo's further description of Bougia contrasts equally with its present dilapidation. "Wonderful," he says, "is the architec-

ture of its houses, its temples, colleges, and palaces. Numerous are the professors of the arts: some of them are teachers of law; others, of natural philosophy." He speaks also of its sumptuous inns, its wide and elegant market, and of walls adorned with the most beautiful inscriptions in wood and plaster. Did Leo mean all this description to apply to the town when it was under Spanish domination? I certainly think not; for he immediately adds, that the opulent citizens of Bougia gave great vexation to the Spaniards, by their powerful piratical galleys; on which account, Peter, Count of Navarre, was sent by the King of Spain with an army, and fourteen ships of war; and that the natives, flying from the town, gave it up, full of rich plunder, to the Spaniards. This was in 1508, when Leo was sixteen years old. He published his 'History of Africa' in 1526, and if he ever saw Bougia, is more

likely to have seen it under Spanish than Moorish dominion. Nevertheless, I think he ascribes to the Moors, and not the Spaniards, all the splendid edifices of which he speaks, although it is probable that the Moors had employed Italian architects. A few years afterwards, Barbarossa made an attempt to recover Bougia, but it proved abortive.

Whilst I was passing down to the harbour, to embark for Bona, I observed, on the walls of its fortress nearest the sea, two stones, with an inscription on each, but at such an elevation that I could not read them. Mr. Bransil, however, kindly promised to copy them for me; and, on my return from Bona, I found that they were as follows :—

SEPT. 30. SIENDO CAPITAN Y ALCAYDE EN
ESTA FORTALEZA POR EL EMPERADOR
CARLO QUINTO DON LUIS DE PERALTA, HIJO
DE DON ALONZO DE PERALTA Y DE DONNA ANA
DE VELASCO MARQVES DE FALCES—LOADA
SEA DIOS. ANNO 1543.

The other inscription is in Latin, to the purity of which if you object, I can only say that I give it as Mr. Bransil transcribed it for me;—

ECCE TESTES VICTORIÆ OBTENTÆ
IN EPIPHANIA PROPRESIDE SEBASTIANO
DEL CASTILLO PRO LUDOVICO DE PERALTA
GENERALI. ANNO 1545.

From the latter inscription, it is evident that there had been hostilities between the natives and the Spaniards long subsequent to the repulse of Barbarossa, and in the interval between that event and the final abandonment of the place by the Christians.

Laugier de Tassy, writing early in the eighteenth century, mentions Bougia as a town pretty strong and well peopled. It is the capital, he says, of a province bearing the same name, which formerly was a kingdom under the dominion of the Arabs. It

was built by the Romans, and the Goths established there the seat of their empire. Abni, a Saracen prince, chased them from thence in 762. Joseph, the first King of Morocco, conquered it, and gave it to Hurchan Urmeni, a prince of his race, whose heirs reigned over it until the twelfth century. It was then conquered by the King of Tunis, who gave it to Abulferez, one of his sons, in whose family it continued till it was captured by Peter of Navarre, in the reign of Ferdinand V. of Spain. After the defeat of Charles V. before Algiers, the Algerines took advantage of the occasion, and marched with all their forces on Bougia. They stormed the castle on the harbour, and the citadel on the heights; so that Alonzo de Peralta, the Spanish Governor, demanded a capitulation. He was allowed to return, with four hundred men, to Spain, where the monarch condemned him to lose his head.

M. Genty de Bussy, late Intendant Civil, or Commissary General of the French Government in the Algerine Regency, has published the names of the native tribes, to the number of between thirty and forty, who inhabit the territory around Bougia, to the distance of forty miles. He estimates their men capable of bearing arms at fifteen thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry. From all these tribes, however, I do not believe that the French collect a single franc; the Bey of Constantina himself, in whose province they lie, cannot extort tribute from more than a third part of them.

Those Highlanders maintain their independence as hardily against the French as they used to do against the Turks. It was but the other day that they skirmished with the former at the blockhouse, only a mile out of town, on the plain between it and the river Mansourah. They were ex-

pected to visit the French outposts on the very day of our first touching at Bougia; but they did not come, and thus disappointed us of the sight of a little battle. In Leweson's time, the Turks kept here three hundred infantry, and one hundred cavalry; but this force was barely sufficient to keep the Kabyles on the outside of the walls. The Algerines, for the sake of their navy, were obliged to purchase timber from the woody mountains of this province, and to be their very humble customers. The products of the country are oil, soap, dried figs, and, above all, carpenters' wood; they also manufacture spades and ploughshares.

In the course of the day we embarked for Bona, and immediately on clearing the Bay of Bougia passed a place called Jigel, sometimes pronounced Gigery, which was once a considerable town, though now reduced to a few miserable houses. In look

ing to this part of the coast, I could not but recall the affecting adventures of an Irish family, who were once wrecked on it. Their story is told by Laugier de Tassy, which I shall give you pretty nearly in his own words. On the 23rd of October, 1719, Madame Bourk embarked for Cette, in Languedoc, on board a Genoese vessel; she had with her her son and daughter, and her brother-in-law, the Abbé Bourk—besides a secretary and six domestics, four women and two men. She was bound for Spain, where she was expected by her husband, Count Bourk, who had followed James II. into France, and was now an officer in the Spanish service. The second day, being on the coast of Catalonia, near Barcelona, their vessel was captured by an Algerine corsair; but as the Countess had a passport from the court of France, the pirate captain treated her with the utmost respect, and assured her that no wrong

should be done either to her or any of her suite. She asked permission to remain in the Genoese vessel with her family and servants, to which the corsair agreed; but he took the Genoese crew aboard his own ship, and put some Turks in their stead on board of the bark of Genoa, which he took in tow, and set sail towards Algiers.

On the 30th of the month, however, a furious tempest came on from the north-west—the corsair was obliged to cut the cable with which he had towed his prize—and the Genoese bark, unable to keep his company, and driven right before the wind, was forced on the coast between Bougia and Gigery, where it was broken to pieces. The Moorish Kabyles, who during storms from the north keep a good look-out on their mountain-tops for distressed vessels, watched their prey, and came down to plunder the wreck. The Algerine sailors, who saved themselves by swimming, told

the natives ashore that they had left in the vessel a princess of France. The Kabyles threw themselves into the water to save the survivors of the wreck—but they could only find Miss Bourk, her uncle the Abbé Bourk, a maid servant, and two valets; Madame Bourk had perished, with her son, her secretary, and three female servants.

On landing, they conducted Miss Bourk and the other survivors to one of the most inaccessible places in the mountains, where tents and food were afforded them; next day the sheiks of the neighbouring tribes assembled to settle what should be done. It was debated whether they should write to the Aga of Gigery, and instruct him to communicate with the consul of France at Algiers about the ransoming of the young lady and her suite, or wait till the consul himself should apply for them; the latter resolution was adopted—upon which Miss Bourk, though she was only ten years old,

wrote a letter to the French consul at Algiers, informing him of their sad situation, from which she conjured him to redeem them at whatever price. The Moors conveyed this letter to a Maraboot near Bougia, whose sanctity was in such odour, that, when poor people in the country asked for charity, they begged for it in the name of God and of this Maraboot; the holy man instantly sent off the letter by an express to Algiers. It reached the French consul; but as there happened to be a special envoy from France at the time in Algiers, the consul put the business into his hands.

Meanwhile, before an answer could be received, a young Kabyle, the only son of one of the most considerable sheiks, saw Miss Bourk, and asked his father's leave to marry her. The consent, however, of the other sheiks was necessary; but when the father applied for it, some of the most

powerful of them disputed the prize; and it was resolved in full council, that all individual claims to the little Christian's hand should be given up, and that her ransom and that of her suite should be divided among the tribes.

The envoy of his Most Christian Majesty made immediate application to the Dey of Algiers for the deliverance of the captives. The Dey replied, that the Kabyles in that quarter did not acknowledge his authority, but promised to do his best for the relief of the sufferers; and he sent orders to the Agas of Bougia and Gigery to use all possible means for recovering them: at the same time he wrote to the principal Maraboots of these two places, desiring them to act in concert with the Agas. On the 24th of November the envoy of France dispatched a vessel, which set sail for Bougia from the port of Algiers. On board this vessel was Ibrahim Hoja,

the interpreter of the consul, who carried orders to the Agas and the Maraboots; the instant that these letters were received, a negotiation for the ransom of the prisoners was commenced, and it finished in their being released. Miss Bourk and her suite reached Algiers in safety, and with equal safety returned to France.

END OF VOL. I.

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